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SIDNEY.

I.

"Yes," said Mrs. Paul, "they are really the most extraordinary people. Mortimer Lee began to be queer as soon as he was married, and Sidney's mother was a silly sort of woman. She was born here in Mercer, you know; that house they live in now was left her by her grandfather. After her death her husband came back to it with Sidney. Naturally, he wanted the child to be brought up near her mother's people, though they 've all died out now. But I knew him before he was married. Ah, he was very different in those days. Marriage ruined him. Marriage has more effect upon a man's character than upon a woman's. Just remember that, sir!"

Alan Crossan laughed. "And always for the worse?" he suggested.

"Some men cannot be worse," said Mrs. Paul significantly; "but for Major Lee, all these absurd ideas came into his head after he met his wife."

"They were the effect of her death, though, were n't they?" the doctor asked.

"Of course," answered his hostess sharply; "but if he had n't had such a wife to die, he would not have been so affected. She was a woman of absolutely no sense, I tell you, — some people called her handsome, though I never could see it; but that he grieved so wickedly for her shows the result of having lived with her for ten years. For really, you know, by nature, Mortimer Lee is no fool?"

"Well, no," said the young man, smiling.

"I did n't see him while she was alive," proceeded Mrs. Paul, — "they lived somewhere in the South; but he came back as soon as she died. I 've sometimes thought it was her doing that he did n't come before. Sidney must have been about three years old then; let me see, — yes, they have been here twenty-two years, certainly. Dear me! I did not realize that Sidney was so old. He took her education in hand as soon as she could talk; and you see the result. She is her father over again."

"Is she?" the doctor said. "I remember that she was unlike anybody else when we were children, before I went abroad; but that was fifteen years ago."

Alan Crossan sighed. There had been many changes in these fifteen years; scarcely anything remained as he had known it then. Only the two old houses, Mrs. Paul's and Major Lee's, looked as they had looked when he and his mother had come to say good-by, before they sailed for Germany, where he was to be educated, and where his mother had died, leaving him at twenty to drift down into Italy, where the years had wrapped him in a lazy dream, and where he had studied a little, painted a little, and fancied that he had thought a great deal. Indeed, this sunny life might have gone on indefinitely, if the sharp distress of another man had not aroused him to

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the thought of coming back to America. With that thought came an amused realization of the uselessness of his life, and a desire for the new interest of action. To be sure, he had practiced his profession in the little Italian town where he had first met Robert Steele; but it had never absorbed him any more than his violin had absorbed him, or his wood-carving, or his painting. He was at heart a dilettante, he told himself; but this reflection did not disturb him, for he declared that he was no more responsible for his disposition than for the color of his eyes, and he was almost as powerless to change the one as the other. But when he came to observe, curiously, though with sympathy, Robert Steele's pain, he began to be half ashamed of himself, because he had never suffered, and never very greatly cared about anything.

"Odd," he thought, "that it is the sight of trouble which makes me want to live more earnestly; for the deeper you live the more trouble you have. But I suppose trouble is a man's birthright, and instinct makes him seek it. Well, I am going home, and I am going to do some work in the world before I die."

Such an impulse was amusing, he said, but that did not change his purpose. "I shall go back to America with you," he announced to Mr. Steele. "I shall make a well man of you yet, Bob. I shall be your physician: all rich men have a physician at their elbow, and, thank Heaven, you 're a rich man now. Don't groan. It 's a good thing. But if it distresses you too much, why, my fees will doubtless be a comfort. Yes, we 'll go back to Mercer. There are half a dozen families there who will have to employ me, out of sentiment. That 's the advantage of being the son of your father, — it creates sentiment. And they all know you, of course. I tell you, old man, you 'll be a coward if you don't go back there and live it down. Come, now, when shall we start?"

There was a cheerful certainty about this young man's determinations which made people incapable of resisting them. His friends yielded to his wishes with protestations which were not often serious, because they were known at the outset to be useless. Robert Steele was too sad and too indifferent to protest; and so it came about that they found themselves, that autumn, settled in Mercer, in a house that belonged to Alan, which an obliging tenant had just vacated. The doctor had to admit, however, that sentiment did not move the half dozen families as it should have done, and patients came very slowly.

But Mr. Steele, at least, had not been forgotten. The young man who had invested trust money in a certain company of which he was himself a director, and then, seeing that values were about to fall, had refused to sell without proclaiming the future depreciation of the stock, was too extraordinary a person to be forgotten. If Robert Steele had embezzled fifty thousand dollars, the community could scarcely have been more startled and horrified than when it learned of his abnormal honesty which had permitted fifty thousand shares of stock to become worthless in his hands. The money he had invested had been his mother's, and that Mrs. Steele's death was hastened by her bitter and futile anger at her son's wicked quixotism could not be doubted, least of all by her son. The misery of that time left its imprint upon his soul, and it was the sarcasm of fate that at the end of two years the stock which had been thought worthless slowly regained its value. What did he want with money, while his mother's reproaches still rang in his ears?

It was at this crisis that Alan had found him in the little sunshiny Italian town, sick in mind and body, and blurring the misery of memory by a certain daily prick in the arm. He had begun this use of morphine to make bodily pain endurable, for he had been very ill,

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and after that the tortured mind demanded it. To the doctor Robert Steele had been at first merely an interesting case. A man strong enough to perform an act of moral heroism, but weak enough to seek relief in morphine, was an anomaly which suggested defective cerebration to the physician. But after a while, the sweetness of Robert's nature, his noble ideality, appealed to the doctor with a demand for respect which grew into reverence.

"I cannot understand it," he acknowledged frankly to the sick man. "You were a fool about that stock beyond a doubt, but it was a glorious folly; and you are a coward now, with nothing glorious about it. But here I am, going back to America with you. Well, such capacity for enthusiasm proves that I am still young."

This dull November afternoon the doctor had been telling Mrs. Paul of certain noble traits in Robert Steele, for whom she had nothing but contempt, and he had spoken of Major Lee's kindness to the sick man, to which she replied that that was only because Mortimer Lee was himself unintelligible; and from that their talk had drifted to those theories which had been developed in the life and education of the major's daughter.

A chill mist had brought an early dusk into the garden outside, but there was a fire smouldering on the hearth, which made a little halo of brightness, in which Mrs. Paul sat. The room was full of shadows, although the Venetian blinds had been drawn up to the very tops of the long windows, so that the gray afternoon light might delay Davids with the lamps as long as possible. That John Paul, sitting close to one of the windows, his big head showing like a silhouette against the pale background of the sky, could not see to read his paper did not trouble his mother at all. Of course he had not protested; to John Paul's mind there were very few occasions that were worthy of protest. But his mother was aware that he had put his paper down, and was waiting for the lights. Indeed, it would have been hard to name any circumstance in her own house of which Mrs. Paul was not aware. She made no comment upon it, however; instead, she repeated Alan's words.

"Fifteen years ago!" she said, lifting one delicate hand to shield her face from the fire. "Is it possible that you have been away fifteen years? Shame on you! You deserve to find yourself forgotten. Indeed, I should have forgotten you ten times over, except that I knew your father so well. Yes, you are right in saying that Sidney was different from other children; perhaps it was because she knew so few of them. That was another of Mortimer Lee's beautiful ideas, — that she should not know girls of her own age. I suppose he was afraid she might acquire some healthy notions. But he need n't have been. Good sense is not catching. Look at Sally Lee. I 've done my best for her. I suppose I 've seen her nearly every day for twenty years, — but she will always be a goose. She can't develop brains in her old age. I call Sally old, in spite of her ringlets. Dear me! why is it that an unmarried woman does not know how to grow old?"

The flicker of the fire showed a glimmering smile in Alan's eyes. He was standing with his elbow on the high mantelpiece, looking down at the keen old face before him.

"I am very fond of Miss Sally," he said. "She belongs to the salt of the earth."

Mrs. Paul lifted her hands impatiently. "Good?" she said, — "of course; but, Lord, how uninteresting goodness can be!" Her careless glance rested on his face, and lengthened into a steady look. "Alan," she declared, "you are really a very handsome man. You remind me of your father."

The doctor smiled, — and amusement

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will always save a man from embarrassment. "I thought I looked like my mother," he answered.

"Oh, your mother?" she said carelessly. "I'm sure I don't remember her well enough to say. Yes, you have a beautiful face; but there is nothing behind it. It is the face of a dreamer. It would serve Mortimer Lee right if Sidney fell in love with you; but she sha'n't. I suppose you have about two cents to live on? But, seriously, I hope great things from Robert Steele's being in town."

"Great things?" said Alan lightly. "For whom? Sidney?"

"Of course for Sidney," returned the other. "For whom else?"

"Well, there 's Miss Sally; and as Sidney is never to marry" —

"Oh, fudge! Sally! Don't talk to me about Sally," interrupted Mrs. Paul. "If the young man has lost his wits, you had better never take him to the major's again, — that 's all I have to say. And as for Sidney, certainly she will marry. We all know what theories amount to when a girl falls in love," — she seemed to brush aside an invisible feather. "Beside, she must marry. What is going to support her when her father 's gone? And he can't live forever. He 's quite old now; sixty-five, at least. Yes, Robert Steele's money is just the thing that family needs. I hope you will make him call there often."

"If you remember Robert Steele," returned the doctor, "you will know that you can't arrange things for him. And if you decide that he is to fall in love with Sidney, it will be the very thing he 'll not do."

"Fudge!" cried Mrs. Paul again. "My dear Alan, you don't know what you are talking about. He can't help it. Neither could you, if you had anything to support a wife upon."

"But poor Steele," protested the doctor, — "why should you want his heart broken? If the major is in earnest that Sidney shall not marry, and if she agrees with him" —

"Of course he is in earnest, and of course Sidney agrees with him," Mrs. Paul broke in; "but a theory cannot change the order of nature, my young friend. Really, I almost lose my patience when I think of it. Of all ridiculous notions! A girl must not marry, forsooth, because her husband may die, and so she may be unhappy. As though to be a widow with plenty of money were the hardest thing in the world!"

"You have not found it so?" inquired Alan amiably.

"You are impertinent, young man!" declared his companion, and then she laughed. "I suppose that is the reason I like you. But these notions of Mortimer Lee's, — I am sure that they grew out of some disappointment after his wife's death. I shall never believe that such a man as he could blast his whole life because of a chit of a girl, though I have no doubt that he was really attached to her. He may have loved some one else, for instance, but thought, because he was a widower, — a man is really settled when he is a widower, — or perhaps — But why do I talk to you? You don't know anything about Mortimer Lee; I do. I watched him in those days, I can tell you. Johnny's father had just died, and I — understood him, naturally. Lord! how little sense men have!" She drew her eyebrows together, and frowned, absently, at the fire. The room was quite dark now, and under cover of the shadows John Paul yawned. He had risen, and stood like a spot of burly darkness against the fading oblong of the window. He was not interested in the conversation about the Lees: perhaps because the topic was far from new; perhaps because he was wondering how that speech upon the tariff, which he had put down when it grew too dark to read, had ended. With his hands behind him, he stood, while his mother talked, staring out into the forlorn and frosted garden,

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which lay in shivering nakedness under the cold sky. This garden, inclosed by its brick wall, extended behind the house, as well as in a narrow strip on each side of it. In front, below the drawing-room windows, there were no flower-beds; only a bit of decorous lawn, ending in three terraces, and then a hedge along the low stone wall upon the street, which some twenty years ago had been a country road. The street had been graded, so that the old house was left high above its level. The dreary outskirts of the bustling little manufacturing town had pushed closer and closer upon the house; a mill loomed up in the street below, and now and then a belching flame from a giant chimney sent a flare of light through the fan-shaped window above the white front door, or a fitful gleam across its brass knocker and knob. The hall within was wide and cheerless, although it had plenty of light; the leaded windows on either side of the door threw two lines of fluctuating brightness across the old Turkey carpet; and opposite the drawing-room door — for the house was not double — there was a wide, low window, full of many small panes of glass. To be sure, it looked only upon the blank of the garden wall, dark with ivy, and across a small grass plot, on which, upon a pedestal, was a sadly rusted iron Magdalen, with a cross upon her knees. The sunshine poured through this window in the morning, and the dimity curtains were always pushed back, that the hall might have as much light as possible all day long. Yet it was never anything but gloomy. Dark family portraits in tarnished frames followed the wide staircase, and a faded engraving of the Trial of Effie Deans, hanging between the entrance to the dining-room and the green baize door of the drawing-room, added to its solemnity. Under the staircase stood a row of tall old fire-buckets, and a rosewood table for the candles and lamps, which, however, were never lighted until a certain hour, no matter how the late afternoon might darken with fog and mist.

Mrs. Paul's rules were not to be broken by such things as wind and weather. And as for cheerlessness, — her house suited her, she said, and other people were not obliged to live in it. It did suit her, although sometimes she resented the loud intrusion of the approaching town, but it was more with the petulance which is an occupation than because of any genuine annoyance. The felting in the windows, and the green baize door closing with noiseless tightness, shut out the clamor of the street below. Furthermore, there was always the consciousness that, if she wished, she could move away, as half a dozen other families had done; their estates being swallowed up by streets, and their dignified old houses turned into mills, or factories, or great tenements. When money is to be considered, human beings often display a curious indifference to the roofs which have sheltered their joys and sorrows and their sacred death-beds; but it was not any sentimental regard for her old house which kept Mrs. Paul here on the hill, nor was it altogether the feeling of superiority in being loyal to traditions to which her neighbors had been faithless.

Her sense of duty, she declared more than once, was really morbidly strong. "Of course," she said candidly to Miss Sally, "you and Sidney are no companions for me, and Mortimer Lee never sees fit to come to see me; but what would you do without me? Heaven knows what would become of Sidney if I were not here to teach her manners. No, I will not give you up."

Little by little, all her interests had centred upon the major's household. It was ten years since the last of her older neighbors had moved away; and although no one knew that they had ceased to remember, or were themselves forgotten, these friendships belonged only to the past.

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"Yes," Mrs. Paul explained to the doctor, "my first thought is for Sidney. With a simpleton for an aunt and a wicked infidel for a father, what would become of her if it were not for me? And I mean that she shall be married, I can tell you that, — if it were only to teach Mortimer Lee a lesson! Everybody knows Robert Steele's folly, but it's all over and past. I'm not one to remember a man's sins against him. Besides, he has his money back again, and this time he'll keep it. Now, remember, you are to take him with you to the major's every chance you get. I shall invite him to meet Sidney here, too. It won't be the first time I've given Providence a hint. Johnny knows that. I was bound he should n't have her, for Sidney must marry a rich man, and Johnny has n't a cent, except what I choose to give him."

John Paul shrugged his shoulders in the dusk, but did not speak.

"It's a pity he is n't well," she continued. "What did you say was the matter with him?"

"I did not say," Alan answered briefly.

Mrs. Paul laughed, with an impatient gesture. "Oh, you young doctors!" she said, "your importance is most amusing. I suppose you use it instead of sense. There! go home. I'm tired of you. I wish you would see that that medicine is sent in for Scarlett. I hope you appreciate my friendship in letting you experiment upon my maid. Johnny!"

"Yes, mother," said her son, coming to her side, as the door closed behind the doctor.

"I will play a game of draughts with you," she said, pushing her straight-backed armchair a little farther from the fire; "there is time before tea. Just fetch the table, and ring for Davids to bring the lamps."

John Paul rang the bell, and silently brought the small table, with its inlaid checkerboard of ivory and ebony; as he did so, the baize door opened, and Davids stood like a lean shadow against the dusk of the hall behind him.

"You may fetch the lamps," said Mrs. Paul, beginning to arrange her men, the old-fashioned rings flashing upon her hands.

"It is not," said Davids, moving his shaven jaws with deliberation, "a quarter to six."

Mrs. Paul looked up. "I think you might as well bring them," she said half apologetically, "if they are ready."

"They are not yet lighted" — he began to say, with respectful stubbornness, but John Paul interrupted him quietly.

"Bring the lamps, Davids," he said, and the man went at once to get them.

"I can give my own orders, thank you!" cried Mrs. Paul angrily. "You take too much upon yourself, sir! Please remember that this is my house."

She was still frowning when Davids returned with two tall lamps, whose ground-glass globes faithfully imprisoned the light. He put one on either end of the mantel, and then, with a noiseless step, brought a footstool, and arranged a screen between his mistress and the fire, which had brought a delicate flush to her soft old cheek. After that he lit the candles in the sconces and put another lamp on a table at Mrs. Paul's elbow, so that in a moment the room was flooded with soft light.

This drawing-room of Mrs. Paul's was handsome, and almost interesting; but the wainscoting above the bookcases built into the wall made the corners dark, and there was no cheerful litter of home life about it. A bust of the late Mr. Paul stood between the further windows, and over the mantel there was a painting of a very young girl in a white gown and pink ribbons. This was Annette, the child who had died, and for whom, it was said, Mrs. Paul had not grieved. Indeed, she had seemed angry at the child rather than at fate. She

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never spoke of her, but silence is sometimes more bitter than words.

All this was more than twenty-five years ago, when John Paul was less than twelve years old, and had been sent away to boarding-school that he might not be a nuisance to his mother. Mrs. Paul did not often look up at this picture, even when she was alone, and she had been heard to say carelessly that a woman could live her youth over again in her daughter, whereas a son —

But Providence arranged those things, she supposed.

II.

When Mrs. Paul's door closed behind Alan Crossan, he stood a moment upon the steps thinking. A bell had rung in one of the factories, and down in the street a group of tired girls chattered shrilly as they turned toward their homes. Alan, looking through the arbor which covered the flight of stone steps down the terraces to the gate, could see them, and the cobble-stones of the street, and the dingy doorways opposite. It was only through the arbor one caught a glimpse of it all, for on either side of the gate, along the wall, was the high blackthorn hedge.

Just now, heavy drays, loaded with rattling iron rods or bales of dirty cotton, rumbled slowly past. A hand-organ, a block away, broke into a sharp jingling tune; one of the mill-girls began to dance, and there was a shout of noisy laughter from her companions. Alan Crossan frowned. It set his teeth on edge, he said to himself, — the bleak skies, the bald and vulgar streets, and the shrewd wind clattering through the branches of the trees. The doctor was tired. He had been in the almshouse infirmary all the morning, and then had come home to find Robert Steele sunk in the deepest depression.

Of course Alan understood its cause. As his friend made a better and better fight against his controlling weakness; as, steadily, he pushed his morphine further from him, he not only suffered physically, but he grew more aware of his cowardice, and the burden of that thought seemed to fling his soul into the dust of shame. Ordinarily, Alan's glad courage was quick to cheer and comfort the sick man, but this dark afternoon he had felt incapable of the exertion of cheerfulness, and so had wandered out, rather aimlessly, and had found himself, towards dusk, in Mrs. Paul's drawing-room. She amused him, and that, he declared, was good for his moral nature, so it had been a duty to call upon her. As he stood now watching the jostling crowd in the street, Robert's loneliness oppressed him; but he found himself thinking of Major Lee's library and Miss Sally's kindness, rather than of his own power to help his friend. He was in that frame of mind where a man likes to be made much of. "I will go and ask Miss Sally to give me a cup of tea," he said.

He thought again of Robert, as he opened the heavy iron gate and found himself in the street, and he declared that he was a brute to leave his friend alone. But he did not turn back.

Major Lee's house was on the other side of Mrs. Paul's garden wall. Its long-unused driveway (for the major kept no carriage) circled about a little lawn before the porch, and then opened upon a side street, which was really only a lane. Back of the house there was a great tangled garden, inclosed, like Mrs. Paul's, by a brick wall, — it was much larger than hers; and beyond it was a pasture, and then a hillside crowned by sparse, open woods; beyond that were the rolling hills of the tranquil country, untouched as yet by the taint of trade.

The confusion of the bustling town did not intrude here, as it did at Mrs. Paul's. Perhaps this was because of that large silence which seemed to hold the life within.

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"How little the major talks!" Alan thought, as he came through the lane, and looked up at the great gray house, set back in its walled courtyard, "and Sidney only listens. How gracious that bend of her head is, when she listens! Miss Sally talks, of course, but she does not say anything, and her voice is so pleasant."

The Lees' house was larger than Mrs. Paul's, being double and with low wings on either side. The veranda, with its four white pillars reaching above the second story, gave it a certain stateliness, in spite of a look of dilapidation and neglect.

"The fact is," Mrs. Paul had once explained to Robert Steele and the doctor, "Mortimer Lee has no money for repairs. He saves every cent for Sidney, Sally tells me. But I believe he grows poorer and poorer each year. I don't understand it, unless Sally is wasteful about her housekeeping, which I am sure is very likely, for she has less sense than any one I know. She tries to make both ends meet, but" — Mrs. Paul closed her lips with decision, though with the look of being able to say more, if she chose; which indeed was true, but, frank as she was in expressing her opinion of the major's sister, she would have been incapable of parading her arrangements with Miss Sally, whereby she listened every day to a French novel, or history, or the newspaper, and Miss Sally, in consequence, accumulated a little fund, which she called — although Mrs. Paul did not know it — her "poor money." Sidney, quite unconscious of payment being made, sometimes took her aunt's place, although only when it was history or the news.

"French novels won't hurt *you*, Sally," Mrs. Paul declared frankly; "you are too old and too silly."

So Miss Sally, with her delicate and gentle face tingling with blushes, read many strange things to the handsome old woman in the carved armchair. That Miss Sally often went home and washed her little hands with vigorous and tearful protest and with a burning sense of degradation Mrs. Paul never knew, but she would have been delighted had she discovered it.

Housekeeping for Mortimer Lee, with his Virginia ideas of living and his narrow income, was not easy; but Miss Sally was always joyfully content, for was not money being put aside, little by little, for Sidney's future support? Beside, the pleasure of having her allowance for household expenses go always a little further than she had dared to hope, in making her brother and her niece comfortable, filled her faithful life with a reason for being. They were so patient with her, she thought, these two shining ones; they let her love them all she could, though she was so different and so dull. How often she thanked God, with tears, for the blessing of being able to give them all her humble life!

The doctor walked across the sharp cobble-stones of the courtyard, up between the two ailantus-trees which guarded the wide flight of steps, and rang the bell. He could hear its echoing jangle through the long hall, and then, a moment later, Miss Sally Lee's light, hurrying step. The premonition of cheerfulness inside made him shiver in the raw wind. Some wet leaves drifted heavily down from the ivy which had matted thick across the lintel of the window, and a shutter banged drearily on the other side of the house. He was glad to take Miss Sally's cordial hand, and then follow her along the hall and into the library. As they opened the door a gush of firelight danced out, and lit two sudden stars in Sidney's eyes, as she glanced up from her seat in the corner of the old sofa by the hearth.

The room was full of the dusky glow of the fire, for the lamps had not yet been lighted; it glimmered on the bindings of the books which lined the walls and on the heavy furniture, and it lit a

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mimic flame in the darkness against the window-panes.

"Sit down, dear Alan!" cried Miss Sally, pushing a chair toward the fire before the doctor could prevent her. "How is poor Mr. Steele, and won't you tell Sidney she must not try to read by firelight? I was just going to fetch her a lamp when you rung."

Miss Sally's small, anxious face and timid manner always caused Alan to think of a deprecating bird, and made him want to stroke the somewhat ruffled plumage of her hair and dress, and bid her never fear. Instead, he remonstrated with Sidney. "By this flickering light?" he said. "Why, I am astonished at you!"

She had been bending down, so that the fire could shine on the page of her book, and her smooth cheek was scorched in spite of her protecting hand.

"I just wanted to finish a paragraph," she explained, smiling at his reproaches and closing the book quietly.

"What is it?" said the doctor. "What! Von Hartmann, and in German? To ruin your eyes for that sort of thing, Sidney, reflects upon your judgment."

"I did n't understand it very well," she said, "and I did n't like to give it up."

"Of course you did n't understand it," Alan declared, with the instant irritation of a man who sees a charming young woman do a thing which is not charming. Sidney Lee and German pessimism were not compatible; it was like running a steam-engine through a flower garden for a girl to study that sort of thing, he had said to himself more than once. "Nobody understands it who has a healthy mind," he continued. Sidney only smiled. "At least no one ought to want to understand it," he amended, beginning to be good-natured again.

The lazy sweetness of Alan Crossan's temper forbade annoyance for any length of time, so, as he began to talk to Miss Sally, he dropped his solicitude for Sidney's brown eyes, and banished her unpleasant course of reading from his mind.

The cordial firelight, the faint scent of many leather-covered books, mingling with Miss Sally's mild chatter, rested and comforted him. He began to think — for it was not necessary to follow her words — of how he would brace Robert Steele when he went home, and his intention was so genuine that it made him forgive himself for leaving his friend alone all the afternoon. From a word caught now and then, he knew that Miss Sally was saying kindly things about Mr. Steele. That she did not know the secret of his illness did not trouble Alan; he was quite certain that her sympathy for suffering did not depend upon the cause of the suffering; and so, sure of her interest, he burst out into praises of Robert which made him forget that he had been selfish in leaving the sick man.

"I admit," he said, his face full of charming animation, "that his action about that money was absurd; we all acknowledge that. But the motive was noble. And after all, it 's the motive that counts, — yes, it excuses the individual, even if it wrecks a community. He threw away trust money, and the world calls that sort of thing dishonorable; but he did it from a strained idea of honor. Think how brave a man has to be to turn the world's standards upside down! When you come to think of it, though, that 's what all great men have done. Yes, Bob is a man capable of greatness. I 'm so glad you and the major are good to him, Miss Sally. His own people are very cold, you know. Those Townsends on the other side of the river are relatives of his, and Kate Townsend is civil to him, though no one else is. The Draytons in Ashurst are his cousins, but the colonel has n't noticed him since he returned, and of course Steele won't go there without an invitation. As for me, I am that anomaly a man without relatives, — except

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the Pauls; they are third cousins, I believe, — so I have no one who will show him kindness and appreciation, and that sort of thing. But the fact is, there are not many people big enough to appreciate Steele, anyhow. Not that I believe much in relations," he went on, amused by Miss Sally's horror of such a sentiment; "the tie of blood is purely conventional. Sometimes people are friendly in spite of it, but not often. I am convinced that if Mrs. Paul should recollect that her husband was my grandfather's cousin she would treat me as badly as she does John, so pray don't mention it, Miss Sally?"

"Oh, I won't, Alan," she responded, in an anxious flutter; "but I 'm sure you are wrong. Dear Mrs. Paul would only love you more. But you must always feel sure that we love you. Your mother was a dear friend of mine, although I was so much younger than she. I shall always remember how kind she was when I came here first, just a girl, and so distressed at my brother's unhappiness."

Alan did not speak. The reference to his mother silenced him. Her memory was the one deep and sacred thing in his life, the one sorrow of his cloudless years, whereby he was a richer and better man. He felt the pity in Sidney's eyes, although he did not look at her, and he almost forgave her Von Hartmann; or rather, he almost forgave the major, who was responsible for Von Hartmann. The reality of Alan's own sorrow revealed his unconscious flippancy when he once told Mrs. Paul that Major Lee's grief of twenty-two years was like a fly in amber: it might be perfect, but it had no vitality. He could not let Miss Sally speak of his mother again.

"Do you know Katherine Townsend?" he said to Sidney, in a changed voice. She was staring into the fire, her chin resting in her hand and her elbow on her knee.

She shook her head. "No," she said.

"You don't know many girls of your own age, do you?" he asked.

"No," she answered. "You see, all the people we used to know have moved away, except Mrs. Paul. Not that I ever knew any children very well. Somehow, I did not need to know children, when I had father; and now there are nothing but tenements around us."

Miss Sally sighed. "Dear me!" she said, "and what dreadful places they are, the tenement-houses! There is so much suffering among the mill people."

"You enjoy it, dear," interposed Sidney, smiling a little, with her serious eyes on Miss Sally's troubled face. "What would you do without your sewing-school and your visits to your sick people? She will make you go to see them, too, Alan."

"Do you go?" he said, watching the firelight shine in her eyes.

"Oh, no!" cried Miss Sally deprecatingly; "no, indeed, Sidney could n't go. You don't know how sad it is, Alan."

Sidney shook her head, with a shiver. "No," she said. "It is dreadful to know that there is suffering, — but to go to see it!"

"But if by going you make it less?" Alan persisted, too interested to be displeased.

"But you know it cannot really be helped," she answered gently. "The facts of life are not to be changed by a bowl of soup or a bottle of medicine. Of course there is the pleasure of giving, — to the giver; but that is really all there is."

"Altruism is another word for selfishness, then?" Alan said, laughing. "Do you go all the way with Spencer, Sidney?"

"No; I am only glad the walls are high, and shut such things out. I — I saw a baby's funeral to-day, aunty; and oh, the poor father and mother were taking the baby's little rocking-horse out to the grave with them, to leave it there, I suppose."

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"What pathos there is in that," said the doctor, — "that putting things on the grave! It is a sort of compromise with death."

Sidney nodded, but Miss Sally was full of interest. "Did you notice where the funeral came from, my dear? Was it from Mary Allen's, do you think? But you don't know where she lives. It came out of Dove's Lane, you say? Oh, yes, — yes, I 'm afraid it was her baby. I heard that it was sick. I must go to see her, to-morrow; poor, poor thing!"

Sidney looked up at the doctor and smiled. "That is the way she does," she said.

They did not talk of the pitiful little funeral any longer, for Miss Sally's kind eyes were full of tears, and Sidney shrank from any mention of pain. The sight of her aunt's concern seemed to fill her with silent impatience; she frowned at the fire, and for a while no one spoke.

The logs had smouldered into a dull glow, when Miss Sally rose to bring the lamps. Alan sprang to his feet to help her, but Sidney, lifting her eyes from the red ashes, only glanced back into the shadows, and said she had not realized that it was so dark. Miss Sally, however, refused Alan's aid, and the two young people fell again into silence, until a step in the hall made a sudden gladness flash into Sidney's face, and she rose to welcome her father. Alan could hear the murmur of their voices in the hall, and then they entered together; the major standing for a moment in the doorway, like a wavering shadow, while he put his glasses astride his nose, and peered through them at the guest in the chimney corner. Then he extended his hand to the young man, in silent and friendly greeting.

His eyes were only for Sidney, but he smiled at Alan when he heard Miss Sally, as she came in with the lamps, tell the doctor that he must stay to tea, and he said gently, "Yes, surely, surely." From the hollows under his shaggy brows, eyes as dark and shining as Sidney's own watched her as Alan talked. It seemed as though every motion and glance of hers fell upon the shrine of his heart; he smiled when she did, for very joy of seeing his darling pleased. He did not listen to what the young man said to her, although sometimes he bent his white head in gracious attention; he took no part in the conversation, and did not speak again until they rose to go in to tea.

Then he said, "I called upon Mr. Steele this afternoon, Alan."

"Did you?" cried the doctor, his face brightening with surprise and pleasure. But the major did not pursue the subject just then.

"Will you give my sister your arm, sir?" he said courteously.

As he spoke, he offered his own to his daughter, and gravely followed Alan and Miss Sally to the dining-room. This formality was as much a part of the major's precise and silent life as was his daily walk to the bank or his cigar at seven. Family rudeness, which goes by the name of affection, was impossible in Mortimer Lee's household; that the stately walk through the wide, bare hall was to a most frugal tea-table was of no importance, and could have no effect upon these decencies of life, — at least in the major's mind.

The doctor had taken tea here frequently since his return to Mercer; for when he had called first, the major, holding his hand silently for a moment, had said, "Let us see you often, Alan. I loved your father, sir." There was something in the old man's voice which made Alan's eyes sting for an unaccustomed instant, and he had come, very often. Sometimes, as he went home, after having taken a great deal of tea from Miss Sally's little thin blue cups, and eaten many slices of bread, he would secretly satisfy his appetite at a convenient shop; for there was a marked

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absence upon the major's tea-table of those things which appeal best to a hungry man, although, to be sure, there was a great show of silver, and plenty of glass dishes cut into wide, unequal stars. But it was a pleasure to Alan to be there, even if he stopped at an eating-house afterwards.

The dining-room was behind the library; its corners were cut off to make convenient closets for Miss Sally's jellies, thereby turning the room into an octagon. It was large, and always seemed dark because of the heavy sideboard, the big armchairs, and the bare and shining mahogany table, although the walls were covered with a light paper in a wide, faint pattern of green palm leaves, and the chintz hangings in the windows were pale and faded.

The major and Miss Sally were at either end of the table, and Sidney sat opposite the doctor; as usual the group was very silent. The major had but few interests; Miss Sally had no opinions; and Sidney's serene indifference to the world needed no words. So, the doctor, eating his bread and drinking his tea, could, without the interruption of conversation, look at Sidney and enjoy himself very much for a whole hour, for Mortimer Lee did not understand haste.

Sidney had a habit, which delighted Alan, of looking up at a person from under her level brows; thinking her own thoughts all the while, but smiling with a grave, impersonal kindliness. Alan could even forget German pessimism when she looked at him in this way. That he ventured sometimes to return her calm, wide-eyed gaze never disconcerted her, which made him perhaps less happy. Now, in a gown of some vague color, that shimmered a little when she moved, and was darned faintly in one or two places (one cannot expect one's grandmother's frocks to wear overwell). Sidney sat dreaming over her bread and honey, quite unconscious of the young man's eyes; her cup, with a quaint little rosy garland about it, or the Chinese pagoda on her plate, interested her as much as he did. The soft color on her cheek was like the flush of clover; the shadows from her shining hair rested on a smooth white forehead; the two lamps on the sideboard and the candles at either end of the table did not light the dining-room very well, so there were many shadows on the young face.

Miss Sally's little maid, who always looked as anxious as her mistress, waited on them as noiselessly as though she were only a small gray and white shadow herself; it was in one of the pauses, while she removed the plates, that the major said again, "Yes, I called this afternoon upon Robert Steele. I am sorry that he does not look better."

"Yet he is improving," Alan answered. "But you know it is hard lines, Major Lee. There are plenty of people to call him a fool; though a man can bear that, for who is going to decide what is wisdom and what is folly, in this world? But when it comes to being called a rogue" —

"True," said the major, — "true."

"Oh, how can any one be so wicked as to think that he meant to do anything wrong!" cried Miss Sally warmly.

"It occurred to me," said the major, "that it might perhaps be painful for the young man to be alone so much" — He paused abruptly. It struck him that this might seem to indicate that he thought Alan neglectful of his friend, so he hastened to say, "And you are, of necessity, absent occasionally, needing recreation from your professional duties," — Alan smiled, — "so I ventured to ask Mr. Steele to make us a little visit. My sister will, I am sure, see that he is made comfortable; and with my household and your frequent calls he will be at least less lonely."

"I hope he said he would come," said Alan joyously. "Ah, he is a good

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fellow! I know you will like him and find him delightful."

"Most certainly," returned the major, lifting his eyebrows a little. He had not asked Robert Steele for his own pleasure.

Miss Sally, however, was saying to herself in dismay, "A visitor, and eggs thirty-five cents a dozen!"

"He did not say definitely that we might expect him," proceeded the host. "Doubtless he wishes to consult his physician. I depend upon you to present my request in more attractive terms than I was able to do."

"Oh, I shall insist upon his coming," answered the doctor cheerfully; "it will be the best thing in the world for him. Miss Sally, you will rob me of a patient!"

"Pray," Major Lee protested, "pray do not make my invitation insistent. The young man must not be driven into it. I could not refrain, however, from asking him to come, he was apparently in such a sad state."

That suggestion of a "sad state" sobered the doctor. Perhaps before urging him to come to his house, the major ought to know of Mr. Steele's struggle with himself! So, afterwards, when his host had risen to open the door for his sister and daughter, and then had returned to the table for his single small glass of wine, Alan spoke of the cause of Robert's illness with some lightness, but with much tenderness towards his friend. Major Lee made no comment; he only said again, as he pushed the decanter towards Alan, "I shall depend upon you, sir, to tell Mr. Steele how much pleasure it will give me to see him in my house."

It was evident that he meant to forget the doctor's explanation.

III.

"So the major has invited your Steele to visit him?" said John Paul. "Do you realize what an effort that is to him? I suppose he did it because everybody is so down on Mr. Steele. I am myself, — confound him! — though I don't think him anything but a crank."

Alan laughed and frowned. "You can't appreciate him, Paul, — that's what's the matter with you. But the invitation is odd. Mrs. Paul has an idea — But I fancy the very fact of the major's taking Bob into his house shows the strength of his theories?"

The doctor wanted to be contradicted, but his companion, after a moment's pause to guess the meaning of the unfinished sentence, nodded, and said, "Yes, exactly. Mortimer Lee would not hesitate to bring all the attractive men in the world into Sidney's presence. She's safe, — more's the pity for the girl."

Alan looked at him with lazy annoyance. To have Paul assume so positively that Sidney's unnatural training would certainly spoil her life irritated him; and yet it gave him a vague assurance, too. The thought of Robert's probable intimacy with the major's family had not been entirely pleasant to the doctor; indeed, the more he had reflected upon it, the less certain he became that such a visit would benefit the sick man. But all the while he was thoroughly aware of the fear which lay behind this thought, and even amused by its pretense, so it did not prevent him from using his utmost influence to persuade his friend to go to the major's; though when, at last, after much urging, Robert consented, Alan took up his violin, and spent an hour, with knitted brows, picking out a difficult movement.

He reflected now that there was no reason why John Paul's assurance that Sidney was safe should be comforting, but it was, at least so far as Mr. Steele was concerned.

The two men had met upon the little covered bridge that spanned the hurrying river, upon either side of which lay the manufacturing town of Mercer, and

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now they were walking on together: Alan to the house of an unexpected patient, and John Paul —

"I am going," he had explained, with unnecessary frankness, and with a dull flush upon his brown cheek, — "I am going out to Red Lane to see a little boy. He has some pups. It 's Ted Townsend, — brother of Miss Katherine Townsend, you know: nice boy; nice pups."

"Nice girl?" Alan observed, stopping to light a cigarette, his eyes smiling over the sputtering match in his hollow hand.

"Oh!" returned the older man hastily; "yes, quite so. Don't see much of her, of course. She has pupils, and that sort of thing. She has to earn her own living, you know. Steele is her cousin, is n't he?"

"Yes, but she would n't permit him" — Alan began to resent.

"No," interrupted John impatiently, "she won't permit any one, — that 's just it. And she has those sisters to look after, and Ted."

"And the pups?" suggested Alan, but John did not notice him.

"Why, think of it, Crossan," he said, taking his hands out of his pockets to gesticulate: "here she is, — Katherine Townsend, a woman who is worth any ten I ever saw in my life (I 'm just an outsider, and unprejudiced; you 'd say the same thing if you knew her), — here she is, giving music lessons to this little Eliza Jennings in the toll-house. Eliza Jennings is a nice little thing, no doubt, but" —

John Paul wore a fur cap, and as he spoke his forehead seemed to disappear under it in two big wrinkles.

"Does Mrs. Paul know Miss Townsend?" inquired the doctor, after a moment's pause; and his companion's abrupt "No" made Alan's eyes dance. Robert Steele, and the smallness of his own practice, and all the little worries of life could be forgotten when he found anything droll. It was a happy temperament, this, which could banish an unpleasant thought by a merry one. "With it, a man does n't live on a mountain-top," Alan had said gayly, "but he finds the foot-hills amazingly pleasant."

John had no more to say of the sister of the boy with the pups; although, as they went past the toll-house, he looked searchingly into the window from which it was Mrs. Jennings' habit to extend one tight, plump hand for a penny. But the small room within was empty, in John's eyes, although, indeed, Eliza Jennings sat in a big chair, with a crocheted antimacassar on its back, rocking comfortably. There was a row of geraniums on the window-sill beside her, which strained the wintry sunshine through a net of scarlet blossoms and broad, vigorous leaves.

"Was it Mr. Paul, ma?" she said, with a sort of gasp, as the fur cap vanished from the small horizon of the toll-window. Eliza's freckled little face grew quite intent as she spoke. It is curious how lasting is the interest in a question of this nature. Eliza Jennings had kept a half look, which meant hope and expectation, upon the small window of the toll-house for many months. Yes, it was almost a year since Mr. John Paul had begun to take these frequent walks towards Red Lane, and in that time Eliza had had many a pleasant nod, or a word or two about the weather, as he handed her a penny for the toll.

With a view to this interest of her life, Eliza could not have lived in a better place than the toll-house. The pedestrian could not come from Old Mercer to Little Mercer save across this bridge. Then, too, as he returned, he must stop long enough to extract a penny from the pocket of his breeches, and where a man is tall and stout this is not done hastily.

The gray toll-house at the end of the covered bridge did not seem to belong among the smart new houses of Little Mercer, but rather as if it had been

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pushed out of the older town when the bridge first crossed the river, and now looked back with regret. There was a yard around it, inclosed by high palings, which were always dazzling with fresh whitewash. In summer, poppies, and bouncing-bets, and bachelor's-buttons pushed between the bars, and gazed with honest sweetness at the foot-passengers, for the garden was always full of riotous color and perfume. Now, only a few brown stalks stood straight and thin in the snow. The wooden arbor in the middle was reached by a tiny graveled walk, which curled about among the flower-beds to make a respectable length. On this cold November morning its seats were piled with powdery snow, which rose in a gleaming dust when the wind blew from up the river, and then settled in small icy ripples along the floor.

This arbor, in which, during the summer, it was the custom of Mrs. Jennings to serve tall glasses of ice-cream to hot wayfarers, had, even in November, a certain sacredness for Eliza. Was it not here that she had first talked to Mr. John Paul? It was a July day, — ah, how well she remembered it! He had brought little Ted Townsend into the summer-house, through the hot sweetness of the blazing garden, and had begged Eliza to fetch him two glasses of ice-cream.

"Every fi' cents Kitty gives me," Ted said, breathless with anticipation, "I spend here, don't I, Miss Eliza?"

John, in a look across Ted's curly head, good-naturedly shared his amusement with Eliza, who felt her heart beat with pleasure.

"He's just grand!" she told her mother, and Mrs. Jennings agreed with her daughter. "It was real good in him to treat Master Ted," she said, "though I should have thought a gentleman like him would 'a' brought the boy's sister along too; for it would seem right nice to her, workin' all day like she does, teachin' this one or that one;" and Mrs. Jennings was glad that her Eliza could stay at home, like a lady, with only a bonnet to trim now and then for a neighbor.

But the little milliner had resented even this small criticism upon the grand gentleman in the garden.

Mrs. Jennings, except where love made her shrewd, was a woman of slow, dull thought, but she began to connect her daughter's sudden desire for improvement in one way or another with that scene in the garden. Not long afterwards, seeing Eliza so faithful in her blundering practice upon the melodeon, she had suggested that her daughter should take music lessons from Miss Townsend, "an' really be a musician, 'Liza," she explained. "Besides, they ain't real well off, you know, and I like to help a body along."

"And pray why not?" Katherine had demanded of Mr. John Paul, as he stood indignant and aghast in her small parlor.

"But, Miss Townsend," he stammered, "you — you are" —

"Delighted to have a new pupil," she finished, and laughed.

Katherine Townsend was always cordial and occasionally sincere. This time, she was both. "Don't you see," she said, "it would be absurd in me to say I would not instruct little Eliza how to play upon her organ with twenty-two stops. I want pupils, and she wants lessons. Why should we both be disappointed?"

"I — I could find you some pupils; there are lots of people who would be glad" — he began; but there was nothing more to say. Miss Katherine Townsend was a young woman who managed her own affairs. Her little house was quite out of sight of any wistful eyes at the toll-house window which might follow Mr. John Paul's figure to the turn by the big barberry bush, which hid the footpath along Red Lane. To be sure, it was plain enough that Mr.

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Paul often happened to be going in or coming out from Old Mercer just when Miss Townsend did, but he never paid the toll for her; she always put down her own money in the most matter-of-fact way, and what could be more natural than for Eliza to say, "Well, ma, they ain't hardly friendly. A young gentleman who was waiting on a young lady would n't let her pay her own toll." And Mrs. Jennings assured her that she was right. Indeed, Mrs. Jennings would have assured Eliza of almost anything, so truly did the heart in her large bosom feel all her daughter's joys and griefs. It was not necessary that Eliza should confide in her. Although she had never seen the diary in which was recorded, in violet ink, the emotions of an empty and harmless little life, Mrs. Jennings knew all, with that maternal instinct which is not dependent upon knowledge. Perhaps the only thing she had not guessed was her daughter's desire for a confidante. Eliza had often thought how happy she would be if she could only "tell" some one, — granted, of course, that the day should come when there would be anything more to "tell" than that there had been a cheery good-morning or a laugh about Ted's passion for ice-cream, and granted also that the confidante should not be her mother. With such indifference is maternal devotion too often received! Sometimes, in a pleasant dream, while she trimmed a bonnet behind the geraniums in the window, or watched the light from the river ripple upon the low ceiling, she thought how much she should like to tell Miss Katherine Townsend that she had "given away her heart." She often pictured the scene to herself, as she sat rocking and sewing, in that delightful misery which only the sentimental young woman knows; and she would sometimes drop a tear upon her ribbon, which always brought her back to practical life with anxious haste. But although Miss Townsend was most kind during the weekly music lesson, this confidential talk never seemed possible. There was a look behind those gray eyes which forbade intimacy, and sometimes made Eliza's thick little fingers tumble over each other on the keys, and her heart beat with a sort of fright.

"It 's perfectly ridiculous in you, 'Liza," said Mrs. Jennings impatiently; "she ain't got any more money than we have, so I tell you! Yes, and them three children to bring up, too. It was different enough when her pa was alive. There! I 'm sorry for her. But you do make me real pervoked at you, when you act as if you were more 'n half afraid of her. She ain't situated so as to be proud."

And indeed Miss Katherine Townsend would have been apt to agree with the mistress of the toll-house. There was much anxiety and hard work in her plain and quiet life, much keen disgust, and weariness with many things. But below all this, which may be forgotten, there was a dull regret which she never put into words. It was in her mind this cold, bright afternoon, when the doctor and John Paul had come over the bridge, and then out along the turnpike into the country.

Katherine had come home from a lesson, tired, she said to herself, of everything; which was but another way of saying that she was feeling the lack of some absorbing occupation of mind. These music lessons were necessary, but never pleasant; Katherine had too much self-consciousness ever to find teaching a delight for its own sake. Ted had run down the lane to welcome her. He had forgotten his coat, in excess of affection, and Ted's colds were a constant anxiety to his sister. Carrie and Louise were squabbling in the upper hall; and the one maid-of-all-work came with heavy, slip-shod tread to the foot of the stairs, to say that the flour was out and the coal low.

Why did the girls squabble? Why did

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Ted cough? Why were Maria's aprons always dingy? "Father's house ought not to be like this; father's children ought not to have such voices." Something seemed to come up into Katherine's throat, but she only stopped to kiss Ted, and break up the small quarrel by asking her sisters to see that his shoes were not wet. Then she dropped down upon her bed until tea-time. She hid her tired eyes in the cool pillow, although with no thought of tears. Miss Katherine Townsend was not one of those women to whom can come the easy relief of tears. Beside, she had nothing to cry about. This thought of John Paul, she said to herself, was too familiar for emotion, and too impersonal. She was only sorry that he was not a braver and a stronger man.

"And yet he is so good," she said, with that same feeling in her throat, — "so good, and honest, and kind. Oh, what shall I do if I cannot make Ted a brave man!"

Of course this young woman understood John's attentions to Ted; she knew what those accidental meetings on the bridge meant to the big, slow, simple man; but what was she to infer if he never put his meaning into words? What she did infer, and what made her manner such that these unspoken words seemed more and more impossible to John, was, that he was unwilling to marry upon the small income which Mrs. Paul gave him; and that he was too indolent or too cowardly to take his life out of his mother's hands, and live it as he chose, in poverty if necessary, and love. For, knowing the sort of life which John Paul led, and knowing too that it was not the natural bent of the man, her conclusion was that he led it because it was easiest. She knew just how his day was passed. There was the warehouse in the morning, where he sat in a little glass office, but where the old head clerk never dreamed of going for assistance or advice. She "preferred to give her own advice," Mrs. Paul had declared contemptuously. John read the letters, but Murray answered them as he saw fit; his ostensible employer, meanwhile, studying his English newspaper, or writing scholarly and stupid articles upon free trade ("which would be the ruin of the house," grumbled Murray, "if anybody ever read them, and they should help the other party"). Besides this, the mornings were good times to look up the pedigrees of favorite dogs. One of these researches among kennel-books resulted in a present to Ted of the mastiff puppies, which greatly inconvenienced Ted's sister. In the afternoon, John could walk, or ride, or read more newspapers, and dream much of Katherine Townsend.

But she, here alone in the cold November dusk, thinking of this lazy, comfortable life, said to herself that it served him right that, after such a day, he had to spend his dull evening until nine listening to his mother's tongue, while they played at draughts by the drawing-room fire, "and just because he has not the courage to break away from it all!" Although in her heart she added "and love me," yet her indignation was that which every earnest mind feels at the sight of neglected possibilities, and not at all the smaller pain of wounded self-esteem. Perhaps her inner consciousness, however, that he did love her made this finer attitude of mind possible.

But Katherine, in her bitter thoughts, was not just. She did not understand that this sort of life may begin in a sense of duty, and end in the habit of content. John Paul had gone into the warehouse for his mother's sake. How glad he would have been to do the work there heartily and earnestly, and how completely his mother had pushed his desires aside, Katherine did not know, and would hardly have respected him more had she known. She could not guess the gentleness of this silent man, or imagine that he shrank from disap-

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pointing his mother, even though he hurt his self-respect by the sacrifice.

But little by little, habit had blurred that pain. John was thirty-six, and for years he had been living on the very small allowance which his mother chose to make him. He had never felt that he earned it, unless indeed he earned it by sitting in silence beneath her gibes, to which he had become so accustomed that he could think his own thoughts all the while. One of the best things he had ever written upon the tariff had been thought out during a game of draughts, while Mrs. Paul had railed about Miss Sally Lee until she was white with anger.

One other thing Katherine overlooked: John had no motive for action greater than this self-sacrifice upon which he was throwing away his soul.

"If she cared anything about me," he said to himself, "if she would even look at me, I 'd fling the whole thing over in a minute."

So this makeshift of life went on, and John Paul made no effort to do anything but endure. He wished he had known Miss Townsend before; perhaps she would have cared for him when he was younger. John felt very old and very steady now, and the only thing he could do was to comfort himself by seeing Ted often, and hearing him talk about Kitty; which was certainly not very satisfactory for a lover.

Margaret Deland.

THE UNITED STATES PENSION OFFICE.

As the United States was the outcome of the Revolutionary War, one of the first duties of the government was the care of the soldiers of that war. Almost as soon as there was any Congress of the United States, and some years before the adoption of the Constitution, pension claims were presented for payment. The general government was not prepared, however, to assume the whole responsibility, and, by a resolution of June 7, 1785, Congress referred to the different States the right of judging who of their citizens were entitled to be placed on the list of invalid pensioners. The States refused to take any action, and the very next Congress found itself confronted with the whole subject again. The general government has assumed the burden of adjudication and payment of pension claims ever since. The appropriations were made for individual cases until 1790, when the first general appropriation of $96,979.72 was made. There was no general pension law until 1792, when it was enacted that, "if any person, whether officer or soldier, belonging to the militia of any State, and called out in the service of the United States, be wounded or disabled while in actual service, he shall be taken care of at public expense." This law is the foundation stone upon which our general pension system has been built. The yearly appropriations under it averaged about $90,800 up to 1800. It was not until 1818 that a service pension was granted to the veterans of the Revolution, and then only to those who had served for nine consecutive months, and who were, "from reduced circumstances, . . . in need of assistance from the country for support." Under this act, up to 1858, over $22,320,000 had been disbursed, and a subsequent law, removing the property qualification, cost $2,601,000.

In 1814, after the close of the War of 1812, the whole amount paid to army

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pensioners was $90,164.36. There is no tabulated statement attainable, showing the actual sum paid in pensions on account of this war, until the year 1871, when pensions were granted to all who had served sixty days. From that date up to 1888, 60,670 claims had been allowed. The disbursements have decreased from $2,313,409.47 in 1872 to $1,670,264.44 in 1888.

The Mexican War has not proved an expensive one. A service pension was not granted until 1887. About 8000 claims were allowed under this act last year, the payment being eight dollars per month in each case.

The foregoing facts are interesting merely as history. They relate to *res adjudicata*, and pension legislation may be considered as completed so far as our old wars are concerned. But in the enormous expenditure for pensions which the Civil War has involved, the increasing demands of its survivors, the apparent willingness of Congress to comply with their most extravagant proposals, — here, indeed, we have a question which demands earnest attention.

It is estimated that there were 289,715 men engaged in the Revolutionary War, 527,654 in the War of 1812, 100,460 in the Mexican War, and 2,780,176 in the War of the Rebellion.

It was, therefore, only natural that the business of the Pension Bureau should increase enormously after the close of the Civil War. In 1865, 72,684 claims were allowed, the disbursements being $8,525,123.11. There was a diminution after this, until the passage of the notorious Arrears Act, in 1879, when 141,466 claims were filed. The appropriation was insufficient, but the disbursements were $57,240,540.14. The law granting pensions has been substantially the same ever since the provisions of the Arrears Act ceased to be operative, June 30, 1880; the only changes of consequence having been made in the ratings of certain specific disabilities. The number of claims filed has, however, increased. From the last report of the Commissioner of Pensions we learn that 75,726 claims were filed in the year ending June 30, 1888, as against 72,465 in 1887, and 31,116 in 1881. For the past few years the number of claims filed by survivors of the War of 1812 has been insignificant, and need not be taken into account. For the Mexican War, 7853 claims were filed in 1888, and 18,718 in 1887. This would make the number of claims filed in 1887 on account of the Civil War 53,747, and in 1888, 67,873, as against less than 30,000 filed in 1881.

The causes which operate to produce the filing of such a large number of claims so many years after the war are several. First among them is the activity of the claim agent.

"The country," said Commissioner Bentley, in his annual report, over ten years ago, "is being constantly advertised and drummed, from one end to the other, by claim agents in pursuit of persons who have honest claims, or those who are willing, in consideration of the fact that it will cost them nothing unless they win their pension, to file claims which have no merit, leaving it to the ingenuity or cupidity of their agent to 'work' the case through."

The numbers and the activity of the claim agents have materially increased since Mr. Bentley's time, and so has the number of claims filed increased also.

A second cause is the belief, based upon party platforms and bills introduced at each session of Congress, that the benefits of the Arrears Act will be extended. As the new act may contain a limitation against claims filed after a certain date, and as it is impossible to say when that date may be, the soldiers, or their widows, argue that it is safest to send in their applications as soon as possible. This condition of affairs is carefully fostered by the claim agents.

Nor must the large number of meri-

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torious claims be overlooked. There are many bodily infirmities peculiar to military life which cause little inconvenience to a man in the prime of life, but which break forth more or less violently in old age. Application for a pension is then made, and the fact that it has not been made before is no reason for suspecting its honesty.

The number of claims allowed in 1887 on account of the Civil War was 46,380, and in 1888, 46,750, as against about 25,000 in 1881. There is no part of the Commissioner of Pensions' report more significant than the table which shows the number of invalid claims filed each year, and the percentage allowed of each year's filing: —

Years in which the claims were filed.	Number of invalid claims filed each year.	Percent. of claims allowed of each year's filing.
1862	1,362	80.1
1863	26,380	74.8
1864	20,263	79.9
1865	27,299	88.7
1866	35,799	87.2
1867	15,905	82.5
1868	7,292	84.7
1869	11,035	81.6
1870	12,991	80.9
1871	8,837	77.0
1872	8,857	76.3
1873	8,728	82.7
1874	9,302	75.7
1875	11,926	75.4
1876	17,030	70.9
1877	16,532	74.7
1878	18,812	74.2
1879	36,835	78.8
1880	110,673	67.8
1881	18,455	48.4
1882	29,004	46.2
1883	35,039	42.4
1884	28,962	39.8
1885	27,959	38.8
1886	35,202	34.2
1887	36,204	21.7
1888	47,349	4.7 [1]

"Invalid" claims are those of soldiers who apply in their own behalf. The claims of widows of soldiers, and of relatives who were dependent upon soldiers for support, are generally more difficult to prove and require a longer time in their adjudication than the invalid claims. It is a pity, therefore, that the table does not include these claims. It is also to be regretted that the table does include claims on account of wars previous to the Civil War, which are based upon mere service and are easily and quickly established. If the former were included, and the latter excluded, the result would be even more noteworthy than it now is.

[1] Up to June 30th.

From this statement of facts, it is evident that there must be something wrong in the method of proving claims. The labors of the Pension Office, at this rate, would seem to be interminable. The force of clerks employed is as large as it ever was, and consists of 1500 employees, at a cost of over $2,000,000 a year. The number of claims filed, as we have seen, increases annually, and the delay involved in their adjudication increases *pari passu* with the increase of claims. The fault lies in the system followed in proving claims under the law.

There is a volume published by the government, entitled A Digest of the Pension Laws, Rulings, Decisions, etc., and in the first edition of this work is to be found a treatise on the practice of the Pension Office. This "practice" is based upon the orders, rulings, and decisions of the Secretaries of the Interior and the Commissioners of Pensions for many years back. New decisions rescind old decisions, new points are being constantly ruled upon, and the system has become elaborate and complex. Under it, all the facts necessary to establish a claim, which are not shown by the official record in the War Department, are proved by the *ex parte* documentary evidence submitted by the claimant, or his attorney, to the Pension Office. Whether this evidence is good or bad, truthful or untruthful, the Pension Office must find out as best it can. It sees neither the claimant nor his witnesses. The whole case is conducted in writing.

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To prove a pension claim under the law, it must be shown, in the first place, that the disability alleged originated in the service and in the line of the soldier's duty. Not in one case out of twenty is there any record at the War Department showing this. In the absence of such record, the Pension Office requires the testimony of the regimental surgeon who treated the soldier, and of the commissioned officer whose business it was to have cognizance of his condition. If the testimony of neither can be procured, — and this is generally the case, — after the claimant has shown why he cannot procure their testimony, the evidence of two of his comrades is considered.

If the claim is on account of disease, as most of the claims are, it must next be shown that the claimant was disabled by the disease at the time he left the army, and that it has continued to disable him up to the present time. This must be proved by physicians who have treated the claimant. If physicians' testimony cannot be procured, the testimony of employers and neighbors is considered. If he satisfies these demands, and if the United States Examining Surgeon declares he is disabled for performance of manual labor by the ailment he claims for, his claim is proved, and his name is added to the pension roll.

A claim filed shortly after the war was not hard to prove, under these requirements. The witnesses who had served with the soldier in the army were easily found, and their recollection of events was fresh. Similarly, the continued existence of a disease after service could be shown for a short period of years without a long and arduous search for the necessary proof. But with the passage of years the obstacles in the way of proving a claim have largely increased. Regimental officers and surgeons have died, or have forgotten; fellow-soldiers, when any can be found, testify indefinitely and unsatisfactorily. To show that a particular disease has existed continuously for twenty-five years is a task of ever-increasing difficulty.

In considering the testimony produced in accordance with its requirements, the Pension Office has no direct means of ascertaining when an imposition is being attempted. The claimant is not likely to give information against himself, nor are the witnesses whom he selects likely to do so. It is his business to collect evidence to further his interests, and it is nobody's business to discover evidence on the other side. The temptation to perpetrate fraud is strong. The probability of detection is slight. The fear of local public opinion is no restraint upon a dishonest claimant, because his neighbors need never know what proof he has procured. Sometimes a volunteer informer sends word to the Pension Office that the claim is fraudulent; sometimes the postmaster of the town, when written to by the Department, pronounces the character of the witnesses to be bad. But informers are not popular in a community, and postmasters are in no hurry to declare their fellow-townsmen untruthful. The public opinion that would restrain a soldier from openly attempting to defraud the government operates with equal strength in preventing any one from officiously standing in the light of his neighbor's interests.

The delays which inevitably follow the endeavor of the Pension Office to discover the truth are endless. Witnesses are slow to answer the written questions sent them, and sometimes entirely neglect to do so; and to explain to the claimant, or his lawyer, wherein the proof is lacking requires a correspondence covering a long period of time, and in the end attended by unsatisfactory results. In cases of exceptional complications, or where fraud is suspected, a clerk is sent by the Pension Office to the residence of the claimant and his witnesses to examine them.

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This "special examination" is provided for by law, and but few of the claims adjudicated have had the benefit of it. Even when it is instituted, the truth is not always reached. A solitary government clerk, with an extremely limited knowledge of law, is not always a match for the claimant and his sharp attorney. It is hardly necessary to point out the disadvantages of the present system of proving claims to an honest applicant, or its advantages to a dishonest one. The latter, secure from the probability of detection, gets witnesses of the same character as himself, willing to swear to anything, while the honest man's witnesses can testify only to the limited knowledge they possess.

Mr. J. A. Bentley, Commissioner of Pensions under Presidents Grant and Hayes, was certainly the most disinterested, if not the ablest, commissioner who has held the office since the Civil War. He, and he alone, seems to have appreciated the evils of the practice of the Pension Office. As a remedy, he advocated the establishment of numerous local commissions, each one to consist of a lawyer and a surgeon. The commission was to examine claimants and their witnesses openly, in the community in which they lived, and pass upon the merits of the claims; the surgeon attending to the medical aspects of the case, and the lawyer to the points of law involved. Since Mr. Bentley's suggestion, there have been established, under congressional enactment, many local medical boards, each composed of three competent surgeons, for the purpose of making a medical examination of all applicants for invalid pensions. Their examinations have been found to be thorough, and it is difficult to devise any better method for dealing with the medical side of the claim.

No material change has, however, been made in the system followed in proving the legal side of the case. A single legal officer would not be competent to attend to this satisfactorily. He would have to act as attorney for the government and as a judge; and, moreover, the matter is too important to be placed in the hands of one man, for, while the sum of money involved in each case may be small, the aggregate sum is enormous. A better plan would seem to be the establishment of local pension courts, holding their sessions publicly at the points most convenient for the parties concerned. The court, having been furnished with the soldier's army record by the War Department, and the certificate of medical examination by the Board of Surgeons, should notify the claimant to appear with his witnesses, when ready to try the case, and should have power to summon witnesses on its own account, and to punish for contempt. The interests of the government should be protected by the proper legal officer, whose duties should consist, not in a causeless opposition to the claim presented, but in a careful vigilance to discover fraud. The claimant's attorney would attend to his client's interests, and the judge could easily decide in a few hours upon the merits of a claim thus presented.

The nature of the testimony required to prove a claim should remain substantially the same as it now is, but the court should be allowed a certain latitude in accepting less proof. A decision having been reached in a case, the findings and proceedings should be forwarded to the Commissioner of Pensions for his review and approval.

The grounds upon which are based a majority of the special pension acts passed by Congress are that, while the claimant has not been able to obtain the proof necessary to establish his claim under the rules of the Pension Office, it is, nevertheless, a just claim. This is the theory of special pension legislation. The abuses to which it has been carried in practice are too familiar to require any comment. The establishment of

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pension courts would do away with the excuse for this species of legislation, since the proof necessary to establish a claim would be subject to modification in special instances.

The fact that the proceedings would be open and among the claimant's neighbors would cause a dishonest man to hesitate before attempting a fraud on the government; and if a fraud were attempted, the probability would be strong that it would be discovered, — neither of which guarantees of honesty now exists. On the other hand, the fact that the applicant would have speedy justice, and that the court would have power to pass favorably on his claim on less evidence than is now required, would accrue largely to the benefit of the honest claimant.

The details of the plan I have proposed cannot be discussed here. The number of courts necessary would depend upon the soldier population of the States. They would be numerous in the North and West; for the whole South two or three would suffice. After the large accumulation of old claims had been disposed of, the number of courts might be materially lessened. The Pension Office at Washington would consist of a mere handful of clerks, and the most liberal calculation in the number of courts and their expenses hardly results in so large a sum as the present gigantic Pension Office costs; and while this cost cannot be lessened materially for years to come, it would, under the new method, become less and less each year. The appropriations for payment of pensions, now so enormous, would, under the stimulus of quick justice and detection of fraud, also decrease materially.

Gaillard Hunt.

ENGLISH LOVE-SONGS.

In a fair and far-off country, hidden to none, though visited by few, dwell a little band of lovely ladies, to whose youth and radiance the poets have added the crowning gift of immortality. There they live, with faint alluring smiles that never fade; and at their head is Helen of Troy, white-bosomed, azure-eyed, to whom men forgave all things for her beauty's sake. There, too, is Lesbia, fair and false; laughing at a broken heart, but holding close and tenderly the dead sparrow

> "That, living, never strayed from her sweet breast."

She kisses its ruffled wings and weeps, she who had no tears to spare when Catullus sung and sued. And there is Myrto, beloved by Theocritus, her naked feet gleaming like pearls, a bunch of Coan rushes pressed in her rosy fingers; and the nameless girl who held in check Anacreon's wandering heart with the magic of dimples, and parted lips, and thin purple floating garments. With these are later beauties: Fiammetta the ruddy-haired, whom death snatched from Boccaccio's arms, and the gentle Caterina, raising those heavy-lidded eyes that Camoens loved and lost; Petrarch's Laura, robed in pale green spotted with violets, one golden curl escaping wantonly beneath her veil; the fair bluestocking, Leonora d'Este, pale as a rain-washed rose, her dress in sweet disorder; and Beatrice, with the stillness of eternity in her brooding eyes. If we listen, we hear the shrill laughter of Mignonne, a child of fifteen summers, mocking at Ronsard's wooing; or we catch the gentler murmur of Highland Mary's song. She blushes a little, the low-born lass, and sinks her graceful head, as though abashed by the fame

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her peasant lover brought her. Barefooted, yellow-haired, she passes swiftly by; and with her, hand in hand, walks Scotland's queen, sad Jane Beaufort, "the fairest younge floure" that ever won the heart of royal captive and suffered the martyrdom of love. England sends to that far land Stella, with eyes like stars, and a veil of gossamer hiding her delicate beauty, and Celia, and false Lucasta, and Castara, tantalizingly discreet, in whose dimples Cupid is fain to linger sighing, exiled, poor frozen god, from the

"Chaste nunnery of her breasts."

Sacharissa, too, stands near, with a shade of listlessness in her sweet eyes, as though she wearied a little of Master Waller's courtly strains. A withered rose droops from her white fingers, preaching its mute sermon, and preaching it all in vain; for rose and lady live forever, linked to each other's fame. And by her side, casting her fragile loveliness in the shade, is one of different mould, a sumptuous, smiling woman, on whom Sacharissa's blue eyes fall with a soft disdain. We know this indolent beauty by the brave vibration of her tempestuous silken robe, by the ruby carcanet that clasps her throat, the rainbow ribbon around her slender waist, the jewels wedged knuckle-deep on every tapering finger, and even — oh, vanity of vanities! — on one small rosy thumb. We know her by the scented beads upon her arm, and by the sweet and subtle odors of storax and spikenard and galbanum that breathe softly forth from her brocaded bodice, and from her hair's dark meshes caught in a golden net. It is she to whom the glow-worms lent their eyes, and the elves their wings, and the stars their shooting fires, as she wandered through the dewy woods to meet her lover's steps. It is Herrick's Julia whom we see so clearly through the mist of centuries, that cannot veil nor dim the brightness of her presence.

To ask how many of these fair dames have gone through the formality of living, and how many exist only by the might of a poet's breath, is but a thankless question. All share alike in that true being which may not be blown out like the flame of a taper; in that true entity which Cæsar and Hamlet hold in common, and which reveals them side by side. Mr. Gosse, for example, assures us that Julia really walked the earth, and even gives us some details of her mundane pilgrimage; other critics smile, and shake their heads, and doubt. It matters not; she lives, and she will continue to live when we who dispute the matter lie voiceless in our graves. The essence of her personality lingers on every page where Herrick sings of her. His verse is heavy with her spicy perfumes, glittering with her many-colored jewels, lustrous with the shimmer of her silken petticoats. Her very shadow, he sighs, distills sweet odors on the air, and draws him after her, faint with their amorous languor. How lavish she is with her charms, this woman who neither thinks nor suffers; who prays, indeed, sometimes, with great serenity, and dips her snowy finger in the font of blessed water, but whose spiritual humors pale before the calm vigor of her earthly nature! How kindly, how tranquil, how unmoved, she is; listening with the same slow smile to her lover's fantastic word-play, to the fervid conceits with which he beguiles the summer idleness, and to the frank and sudden passion with which he conjures her, "dearest of thousands," to close his eyes when death shall summon him, to shed some true tears above the sod, to clasp forever the book in which he writes her name! How gently she would have fulfilled these last sad duties had the discriminating fates called her to his bier; how fragrant the sighs she would have wafted in that darkened chamber; how sincere the temperate sorrow for a remediable loss! And then, out into the

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glowing sunlight, where life is sweet, and the world exults, and the warm blood tingles in our veins, and, underneath the scattered primrose blossoms, the frozen dead lie forgotten in their graves.

What gives to the old love-songs their peculiar felicity, their undecaying brightness, is this constant sounding of a personal note; this artless candor with which we are taken by the hand and led straight into the lady's presence, are bidden to admire her beauty and her wit, are freely reminded of her faults and her caprices, and are taught, with many a sigh and tear, and laughter bubbling throughout all, what a delicious and unprofitable pastime is the love-making of a poet.

"I lose but what was never mine,"

sings Carew with gay philosophy, contemplating the perfidious withdrawal of Celia's kindness; and after worshiping hotly at her shrine, and calling on all the winds of heaven to witness his desires, he accepts his defeat with undimmed brow, and with melodious frankness returns the false one her disdain: —

"No tears, Celia, now shall win
My resolved heart to return;
I have searched thy soul within,
And find naught but pride and scorn.
I have learned thy arts, and now
Can disdain as much as thou."

From which heroic altitude we see him presently descending to protest with smiling lips that love shall part with his arrows and the doves of Venus with their pretty wings, that the sun shall fade and the stars fall blinking from the skies, that heaven shall lose its delights and hell its torments, that the very fish shall burn in the cool waters of the ocean, if ever he forsakes or neglects his Celia's embraces.

It was Carew, indeed, who first sounded these "courtly amorous strains" throughout the English land; who first taught his fellow-poets that to sing of love was not the occasional pastime, but the serious occupation of their lives. Yet what an easy, indolent suitor he is! What lazy raptures over Celia's eyes and lips; what finely poised compliments, delicate as rose-leaves, and well fitted for the inconstant beauty who listened, with faint blushes and transient interest, to the song! "He loved wine and roses," says Mr. Gosse, "and fair florid women, to whom he could indite joyous or pensive poems about their comeliness, adoring it while it lasted, regretting it when it faded. He has not the same intimate love of detail as Herrick; we miss in his poetry those realistic touches that give such wonderful freshness to the verses of the younger poet; but the habit of the two men's minds was very similar. Both were pagans, and given up to an innocent hedonism; neither was concerned with much beyond the eternal commonplaces of bodily existence, the attraction of beauty, the mutability of life, the brevity and sweetness of enjoyment."

These things are quite enough, however, to make exceedingly good poets, Mrs. Browning to the contrary, notwithstanding. "I never mistook pleasure for the final cause of poetry, nor leisure for the hour of the poet," wrote the authoress of Aurora Leigh, and we quail before the deadly earnestness of the avowal. But pleasure and leisure between them have begotten work far more complete and artistic than anything Mrs. Browning ever gave to an admiring world. Pleasure and leisure are responsible for L'Allegro and Il Penseroso, for Kubla Khan and The Eve of St. Agnes, for Tam O'Shanter, and A Dream of Fair Women, and The Bells. There is so much talk about Herrick's paganism that it has become one of the things we credit without inquiry; shrugging our shoulders over Corinna and her May blossoms, and passing by that devout prayer of thanksgiving for the simple blessings of life,

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for the loaf and the cup, the winter hearthstone and the summer sun. There is such a widely diffused belief in the *necessity for a serious and urgent motive* in art that we have grown to think less of the outward construction of a poem than of the dominant impulse which evoked it. Mrs. Browning, with all her noble idealism and her profound sense of responsibility, was most depressingly indifferent about form, and was quite a law to herself in the matter of rhymes. Carew, whose avowed object was to flatter Celia and Celia's fair rivals, proved himself "enamored of perfection," and wrought with infinite care and delicacy upon his fragile little verses. If he only played at love-making, he was serious enough as a poet; and, amid the careless exuberance of his time, he came to be regarded, like Flaubert some generations later, as a veritable martyr to style. He brought forth his lyrical children, complained Sir John Suckling, with trouble and pain, instead of with that light-hearted spontaneity which distinguished his contemporaries, and which made their poetry so deliciously easy to write and so generally unprofitable to read. Suckling himself, and Lovelace, and the host of courtly writers who toyed so gracefully and so joyously with their art, ignored for the most part all severity of workmanship, and made it their especial pride to compose with gentlemanly ease. The result may be seen in a mass of half-forgotten rubbish, and in a few incomparable songs which are as fresh and lovely to day as when they first rang the praises of Lucasta, or the fair Althea, or Chloris, the favorite daughter of wanton Aphrodite. They are the models for all love-songs and for all time, and, in their delicate beauty, they endure like fragile pieces of porcelain, to prove how light a thing can bear the weight of immortality. We cannot surpass them, we cannot steal their vivacious grace, we cannot feel ourselves first in a field where such delicious and unapproachable things have been already whispered.

"Ah! frustrés par les anciens hommes,
Nous sentons le regret jaloux,
Qu'ils aient été ce que nous sommes,
Qu'ils aient eu nos cœurs avant nous."

The best love-poems of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries amply fulfill the requirements suggested by Southey: their sentiment is always "necessary, and voluptuous, and right." They are no "made-dishes at the Muses' banquet," but each one appears as the embodiment of a passing emotion. In those three faultless little verses, Going to the Wars, a single thought is presented us, — regretful love made heroic by the loyal farewell of the soldier suitor: —

"Tell me not, sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I flee.

"True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field,
And, with a stronger faith, embrace,
A sword, a horse, a shield.

"Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore, —
I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more."

In the still more beautiful lines, To Althea from Prison, passion, made dignified by suffering, rewards with lavish hand the captive, happy with his chains:

"If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty."

In both poems there is a tempered delicacy, revealing the finer grain of that impetuous soul which wrecked itself so harshly in the stormy waters of life. Whether we think of Lovelace as the spoiled darling of a voluptuous court, or as dying of want in a cellar; whether we picture him as languishing at the feet of beauty, or as fighting stoutly for his country and his king; whether he is winning all hearts by the resistless charm of his presence, or returning broken from

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battle to suffer the bitterness of poverty and desertion, we know that in his two famous lyrics we possess the real and perfect fruit, the golden harvest, of that troubled and many-sided existence. A still smaller gleaning comes to us from Sir Charles Sedley, who for two hundred years has been preserved from oblivion by a little wanton verse about Phillis, full of such good-natured contentment and disbelief that we grow young and cheerful again in contemplating it. Should any long-suffering reader desire to taste the sweets of sudden contrast and of sharp reaction, let him turn from the strenuous, analytic, half-caustic, and wholly discomforting love-poem of the nineteenth century — Mr. Browning's word-picture of A Pretty Woman, for example — back to those swinging and jocund lines where Phillis,

"Faithless as the winds or seas,"

smiles furtively upon her suitor, whose clear-sightedness avails him nothing, and who plays the game merrily to the end:

"She deceiving,
I believing,
What need lovers wish for more?"

We who read are very far from wishing for anything more. With the Ettrick Shepherd, we are fain to remember that old tunes, and old songs, and well-worn fancies are best fitted for so simple and so ancient a theme: —

"A' the world has been in love at ae time or ither o' its life, and kens best hoo to express its ain passion. What see you ever in love-sangs that 's at a' new? Never ae single word. It 's just the same thing over again, like a vernal shower patterin amang the buddin words. But let the lines come sweetly, and saftly, and a wee wildly too, frae the lips of Genius, and they shall delight a' mankind, and womankind too, without ever wearyin them, whether they be said or sung. But try to be original, to keep aff a' that ever has been said afore, for fear o' plagiarism, or in ambition o' originality, and your poem 'ill be like a bit o' ice that you hae taken into your mouth unawares for a lump o' white sugar."

Burns's unrivaled songs come the nearest, perhaps, to realizing this charming bit of description; and the Shepherd, anticipating Schopenhauer's philosophy of love, is quite as prompt as Burns to declare its promise sweeter than its fulfillment: —

"Love is a soft, bright, balmy, tender, triumphant, and glorious lie, in place of which nature offers us in mockery, during a' the rest o' our lives, the puir, paltry, pitiful, fusionless, faded, cauldrified, and chittering substitute, Truth!"

This is not precisely the way in which we suffer ourselves nowadays to talk about truth, but a few generations back people still cherished a healthy predilection for the comfortable delusions of life. Mingling with the music of the sweet old love-songs, lurking amid their passionate protestations, there is always a subtle sense of insecurity, a good-humored desire to enjoy the present, and not peer too closely into the perilous uncertainties of the future. Their very exaggerations, the quaint and extravagant conceits which offend our more exacting taste, are part of this general determination to be wisely blind to the ill-bred obtrusiveness of facts. Accordingly there is no staying the hand of an Elizabethan poet, or of his successor under the Restoration, when either undertakes to sing his lady's praises. Sun, moon, and skies bend down to do her homage, and to acknowledge their own comparative dimness.

"Stars, indeed, fair creatures be,"

admits Wither indulgently, and pearls and rubies are not without their merits; but when the beauty of Arete dawns upon him, all things else seem dull and vapid by her side. Nay, his poetry, even, is born of her complaisance, his talents are fostered by her smiles, he gains distinction only as her favor may permit.

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"I no skill in numbers had,
More than every shepherd's lad,
Till she taught me strains that were
Pleasing to her gentle ear.
Her fair splendour and her worth
From obscureness drew me forth.
And, because I had no muse,
She herself deigned to infuse
All the skill by which I climb
To these praises in my rhyme."

Donne, the most ardent of lovers and the most crabbed of poets, who united a great devotion to his fond and faithful wife with a remarkably poor opinion of her sex in general, pushed his adulations to the extreme verge of absurdity. We find him writing to a lady sick of a fever that she cannot die because all creation would perish with her, —

"The whole world vapors in thy breath."

After which ebullition, it is hardly a matter of surprise to know that he considered females in the light of creatures whom it had pleased Providence to make fools.

"Hope not for mind in women!"

is his warning cry; at their best, a little sweetness and a little wit form all their earthly portion. Yet the note of true passion struck by Donne in those glowing addresses, those dejected farewells to his wife, echoes like a cry of rapture and of pain out of the stillness of the past. Her sorrow at the parting rends his heart; if she but sighs, she sighs his soul away.

"When thou weep'st, unkindly kind,
My life's blood doth decay.
It cannot be
That thou lov'st me, as thou say'st,
If in thine my life thou waste;
Thou art the life of me."

Again, in that strange poem A Valediction of Weeping, he finds her tears more than he can endure; and, with the fond exaggeration of a lover, he entreats forbearance in her grief: —

"O more than moon,
Draw not up seas to drown me in thy sphere;
Weep me not dead in thine arms, but forbear
To teach the sea what it may do too soon.
Let not the wind example find
To do me more harm than it purposeth;
Since thou and I sigh one another's breath,
Whoe'er sighs most is cruellest, and hastes
the other's death."

There is a lingering sweetness in these lines, for all their manifest unwisdom, that is surpassed only by a pathetic sonnet of Drayton's, where the pain of parting, bravely borne at first, grows suddenly too sharp for sufferance, and the lover's pride breaks and melts into the passion of a last appeal: —

"Since there 's no helpe, — come, let us kisse
and parte.
Nay, I have done, — you get no more of me;
And I am glad, — yea, glad with all my
hearte,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
Shake hands forever! — cancel all our vows;
And when we meet at any time againe,
Be it not seene in either of our brows,
That we one jot of former love retaine.

"Now — at the last gaspe of Love's latest
breath —
When, his pulse failing, passion speechless
lies;
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes,
Now! if thou would'st — when all have given him over —
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover."

Here, at least, we have grace of sentiment and beauty of form combined to make a perfect whole. It seems strange indeed that Mr. Saintsbury, who gives such generous praise to Drayton's patriotic poems, his legends, his epistles, even his prose prefaces, should have no single word to spare for this most tender and musical of leave-takings.

As for the capricious humors and overwrought imagery which disfigure so many of the early love-songs, they have received their full allotment of censure, and have provoked the scornful mirth of critics too staid or too sensitive to be tolerant. We hear more of them, sometimes, than of the merits which should win them forgiveness. Lodge, dazzled by Rosalynde's beauty, is ill disposed indeed to pass lightly over the catalogue

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of her charms. Her lips are compared to budded roses, her teeth to ranks of lilies; her eyes are

> "sapphires set in snow,
> Refining heaven by every wink,"

her cheeks are blushing clouds, and her neck is a stately tower where the god of love lies captive. All things in nature contribute to her excellence: —

> "With Orient pearl, with ruby red,
> With marble white, with sapphire blue,
> Her body every way is fed,
> Yet soft to touch, and sweet in view."

But when this fair representative of all flowers and gems, "smiling to herself to think of her new entertained passion," lifts up the music of her voice in that enchanting madrigal, —

> "Love in my bosom, like a bee,
> Doth suck his sweet;
> Now with his wings he plays with me,
> Now with his feet," —

we know her at once for the kinswoman and precursor of another and dearer Rosalind, who, with boyish swagger and tell-tale grace,

> "like a ripe sister,"

gathers from the trees of Arden the first-fruits of Orlando's love. It was Lodge who pointed the way to that enchanted forest, where exiles and rustics waste the jocund hours, where toil and care are alike forgotten, where amorous verse-making represents the serious occupation of life, and where the thrice fortunate Jaques can afford to dally with melancholy for lack of any cankering sorrow at his heart.

William Habbington, who sings to us with such monotonous sweetness of Castara's innocent joys, surpasses Lodge alike in the charm of his descriptions and in the extravagance of his follies. In reading him we are sharply reminded of Klopstock's warning, that "a man should speak of his wife as seldom and with as much modesty as of himself;" for Habbington, who glories in the fairness and the chastity of his spouse, becomes unduly boastful now and then in vaunting these perfections to the world. He, at least, being safely married to Castara, feels none of that haunting insecurity which disturbs his fellow-poets.

> "All her vows religious be,
> And her love she vows to me,"

he says complacently, and then stops to assure us in plain prose that she is "so unvitiated by conversation with the world that the subtle-minded of her sex would deem it ignorance." Even to her husband-lover she is "thrifty of a kiss," and in the marble coldness and purity of her breast his glowing roses find a fitting sepulchre. Cupid, perishing, it would seem from a mere description of her merits, or, as Habbington singularly expresses it,

> "But if you, when this you hear,
> Fall down murdered through your ear,"

is, by way of compensation, decently interred in the dimpled cheek which has so often been his lurking-place. Lilies and roses and violets exhale their odors around him, a beauteous sheet of lawn is drawn up over his cold little body, and all who see the "perfumed hearse" — presumably the dimple — envy the dead god, blest in his repose. This is as bad in its way as Lovelace's famous lines on Ellinda's Glove, where that modest article of dress is compelled to represent in turn a snow-white farm with five tenements, whose fair mistress has deserted them, an ermine cabinet too small and delicate for any occupant but its own, and a fiddle-case without its fine-tuned instrument. Dr. Thomas Campion, who, after rhyming delightfully all his life, was pleased to write a treatise against that "vulgar and artificial custom," compares his lady's face, in one musical little song, to a fertile garden, and her lips to ripe cherries, which none may buy or steal because her eyes, like twin angels, have them in keeping, and her brows, like bended bows, defend such treasures from the crowd.

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"Those cherries fairly do enclose
Of Orient pearl a double row,
Which when her lovely laughter shows,
They look like rose-buds filled with snow;
Yet them nor peer nor prince can buy,
Till 'Cherry ripe' themselves do cry."

This dazzling array of mixed metaphors with which the early poets love to bewilder us, and the whimsical conceits which must have cost them many laborious hours, have at least one redeeming merit: they are for the most part illustrative of the lady's graces, and not of the writer's lacerated heart. They tell us, seldom indeed with Herrick's intimate realism, but with many quaint and suspicious exaggerations, whether the fair one was false or fond, light or dark, serious or flippant, gentle or high-spirited; what fashion of clothes she wore, what jewels and flowers were her adornment: and these are the things we take pleasure in knowing. It is Mr. Gosse's especial grievance against Waller that he does not enlighten us on such points. "We can form," he complains, "but a very vague idea of Lady Dorothy Sidney from the Sacharissa poems; she is everywhere overshadowed by the poet himself. We are told that she can sleep when she pleases, and this inspires a copy of verses; but later on we are told that she can do anything but sleep when she pleases, and this leads to another copy of verses, which leave us exactly where we were when we started." Indeed, those who express surprise at Sacharissa's coldness have perhaps failed to notice the graceful chill of her lover's poems. "Cupid might have clapped him on the shoulder, but we could warrant him heart-whole." For seven years he carried on his languid and courtly suit without once warming to the passion point; and when Lady Dorothy at last made up her mind to marry somebody else, he expressed his cordial acquiescence in her views in a most charming and playful letter to her young sister, Lady Lucy Sidney,—a letter containing just enough well-bred regret to temper its wit and gayety. He had fulfilled his part in singing the praises of his mistress, in lecturing her sweetly through the soft petals of a rose, and in sighing with gentle complacency over the happy girdle which bound her slender waist.

"A narrow compass, and yet there
Dwelt all that 's good, and all that 's fair;
Give me but what this ribbon bound,
Take all the rest the sun goes round."

Here we have the prototype of that other and more familiar cincture which clasped the Miller's Daughter; and it must be admitted that Lord Tennyson's maiden, with her curls, and her jeweled ear-rings, and the necklace rising and falling all day long upon her "balmy bosom," is more suggestive of a court beauty, like the fair Sacharissa, than of a buxom village girl.

The most impersonal, however, of all the poet-lovers is Sir Philip Sidney, who, in the hundred and eight sonnets dedicated to Stella, has managed to tell us absolutely nothing about her. The atmosphere of haunting individuality which gives these sonnets their half-bitter flavor, and which made them a living power in the stormy days of Elizabethan poetry, reveals to us, not Stella, but Astrophel; not Penelope Devereux, but Sidney himself, bruised by regrets and resentful of his fate. They are not by any means passionate love-songs; they are not even sanguine enough to be persuasive; they are steeped throughout in a pungent melancholy, too restless for resignation, too gentle for anger, too manly for vain self-indulgence. In their delicacy and their languor we read the story of that lingering suit which lacked the elation of success and the heart-break of failure. Indeed, Sidney seems never to have been a very ardent lover until the lady was taken away from him and married to Lord Rich, when he bewailed her musically for a couple of years, and then consoled him-

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self with Frances Walsingham, who must have found the sonnets to her rival pleasant reading for her leisure hours. This is the bald history of that poetic passion which made the names of Stella and Astrophel famous in English song, and which stirred the disgust of Horace Walpole, whose appreciation of such tender themes was of a painfully restricted nature. In their thoughtful, introspective, and self-revealing character, Sidney's love-poems bear a closer likeness to the genius of the nineteenth than to that of the sixteenth century. If we want to see the same spirit at work, we have but to take up the fifty sonnets by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, called The House of Life, wherein the writer's soul is clearly reflected, but no glimpse is vouchsafed us of the woman who has disturbed its depth. Their vague sweet pathos, their brooding melancholy, their reluctant acceptance of a joyless mood, are all familiar features in the earlier poet. Such verses as those beginning,

"Look in my face; my name is Might-have-been;
I am also called No-more, Too-late, Farewell,"

are of the self-same mintage as Sidney's golden coins, only more modern, and perhaps more perfect in form, and a trifle more shadowy in substance. If Sidney shows us but little of Stella, and if that little is, judged by the light of her subsequent career, not very accurately represented, Rossetti far surpasses him in unconscious reticence. He is not unwilling to analyze, — few recent poets are, — but his analysis lays bare only the tumult of his own heart, the lights and shades of his own delicate and sensitive nature.

It was Sidney, however, who first pointed out to women, with clear insistence, the advantage of having poets for lovers, and the promise of immortality thus conferred on them. He entreats them to listen kindly to those who can sing their praises to the world. "For so doing you shall be most fair, most wise, most rich, most everything! You shall feed upon superlatives." Carew, adopting the same tone, and less gallant than Wither, who refers even his own fame to Arete's kindling glances, tells the flaunting Celia very plainly that she owes her dazzling prominence to him alone.

"Know, Celia! since thou art so proud,
'T was I that gave thee thy renown;
Thou hadst in the forgotten crowd
Of common beauties lived unknown,
Had not my verse exhaled thy name,
And with it impt the wings of fame."

What wonder that, under such conditions and with such reminders, a passion for being berhymed seized upon all women, from the highest to the lowest, from the marchioness at court to the orange-girl smiling in the theatre! — a passion which ended its fluttering existence in our great-grandmothers' albums. Yet nothing is clearer, when we study these poetic suits, than their very discouraging results. The pleasure that a woman takes in being courted publicly in verse is a very distinct sensation from the pleasure that she expects to take when being courted privately in prose. She is quick to revere genius, but, in her secret soul, she seldom loves it. Genius, as Hazlitt scornfully remarks, "says such things," and the average woman distrusts "such things," and wonders why the poet will not learn to talk and behave like ordinary people. It hardly needed the crusty shrewdness of Christopher North to point out to us the arrant ill-success with which the Muse has always gone a-wooing. "Making love and making love-verses," he explains, "are two of the most different things in the world, and I doubt if both accomplishments were ever found highly united in the same gifted individual. Inspiration is of little avail either to gods or men in the most interesting affairs of life, those of the heart. The pretty maid who seems to listen kindly

'Kisses the cup, and passes it to the rest,'

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and next morning, perhaps, is off before breakfast in a chaise-and-four to Gretna Green, with an aid-de-camp of Wellington, as destitute of imagination as his master."

It is the cheerful equanimity with which the older poets anticipated and endured some such finale as this which gives them their precise advantage over their more exacting and self-centred successors.

For what is the distinctive characteristic of the early love-songs, and to what do they owe their profound and penetrating charm? It is that quality of youth which Heine so subtly recognized in Rossini's music, and which, to his world-worn ears, made it sweeter than more reflective and heavily burdened strains. Love was young when Herrick and Carew and Suckling went a-wooing; he has grown now to man's estate, and the burdens of manhood have kept pace with his growing powers. It is no longer, as at the feast of Apollo, a contest for the deftest kiss, but a life-and-death struggle in that grim arena where passion and pain and sorrow contend for mastery.

> "Ah! how sweet it is to love!
> Ah! how gay is young desire!"

sang Dryden, who, in truth, was neither sweet nor gay in his amorous outpourings, but who merely echoed the familiar sentiments of his youth. That sweetness and gayety of the past still linger, indeed, in some half-forgotten and wholly neglected verses which we have grown too careless or too cultivated to recall. We harden our hearts against such delicious trifling as

> "The young May moon is beaming, love,
> The glow-worm's lamp is gleaming, love."

We will have none of its pleasant moral,

> "'T is never too late for delight my dear,"

and we will not even listen when Mr. Saintsbury tells us with sharp impatience that, in turning our backs so coldly upon the poet who enraptured our grandfathers, we are losing a great deal that we can ill afford to spare. The quality of youth is still more distinctly discernible in some of Thomas Beddoes' dazzling little songs, stolen straight from the heart of the sixteenth century, and lustrous with that golden light which set so long ago. It is not in spirit only, nor in sentiment, that this resemblance exists; the words, the imagery, the swaying music, the teeming fancies of the younger poet, mark him as one strayed from another age, and wandering companionless under alien skies. Some two hundred years before Beddoes' birth, Drummond of Hawthornden, he who sang so tenderly the praises of his sweet mistress, dead on her wedding-day, wrote these quaint and pretty lines entreating for her favor:

> "I die, dear life, unless to me be given
> As many kisses as the Spring hath flowers,
> Or there be silver drops in Iris' showers,
> Or stars there be in all-embracing heaven.
> And if displeased, you of the match remain,
> You shall have leave to take them back again."

In Beddoes' unfinished drama of Torresmond, we find Veronica's maidens singing her to sleep with just such bright conceits and soft caressing words, and their song rings like an echo from some dim old room where Lesbia, or Althea, or Celia lies a-dreaming: —

> "How many times do I love thee, dear?
> Tell me how many thoughts there be
> In the atmosphere
> Of a new-fall'n year,
> Whose white and sable hours appear
> The latest flake of Eternity:
> So many times do I love thee, dear.
>
> "How many times do I love again?
> Tell me how many beads there are
> In a silver chain
> Of evening rain,
> Unraveled from the tumbling main,
> And threading the eye of a yellow star:
> So many times do I love again."

It is not in this playful, unreal, and self-neglectful fashion that the truly modern poet declares his passion; it is not thus that Wordsworth sings to us of

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Lucy, the most alluring and shadowy figure in English poetry, — Lucy, richly dowered with a few short verses of unapproachable delicacy and beauty. To the lover of Wordsworth her death is a much keener hurt than it appears to have been to the poet himself. We cannot endure to think of her as he thinks of her, —

> "Rolled round in earth's diurnal course
> With rocks, and stones, and trees."

The musing manner in which he turns from her fair image back to a consideration of his own emotions, the deliberate sadness with which he records her loss,

> "But she is in her grave, and oh!
> The difference to me!"

exasperates us by its dispassionate regret, its tranquil self-communing. Imagine Herrick telling us that Julia is dead, and that he feels the difference! Browning, too, who has been termed the poet of love, who has revealed to us every changeful mood, every stifled secret, every light and shade of human emotion, — how has he dealt with his engrossing theme? Beneath his unsparing touch, at once burning and subtle, the soul lies bare, and its passions rend it like hounds. All that is noble, generous, suffering, shameful, finds in him its ablest exponent. Those strange, fantastic sentences in which Mr. Pater has analyzed the inscrutable sorcery of Mona Lisa, beneath whose weary eyelids "the thoughts and experiences of the world lie shadowed," might also fitly portray the image of Love as Browning has unveiled him to our sight. He too is older than the rocks, and the secrets of the grave and of the deep seas are in his keeping. He too expresses all that man has come to desire in the ways of a thousand years, and his is the beauty "into which the soul with its maladies has passed." The slumbering centuries lie coiled beneath his feet, their hidden meaning is his to grasp, their huge and restless impulses have nourished him, their best results are his inheritance. But he is not glad, for the maladies of the soul have stilled his laughter, and the brightness of youth has fled.

Agnes Repplier.

A PRECURSOR OF MILTON.

THE bookworm has hidden wings, on which he makes aerial journeys, with chosen spirits for his guides, and besides these happy flights, the love of letters carries him into many pleasant earthly by-ways. All students have not the ardor which led the Frenchman Ampère, on his Voyage Dantesque, to every spot on the terrestrial ball named in the Divina Commedia; but how many pilgrims have sought Stratford-on-Avon, George Herbert's country parsonage, the church at Clevedon with its sublime monument of In Memoriam, Petrarch's fountain at Vaucluse, Horace's Fons Bandusiæ, Lamartine's lake, Goethe's Thuringian forest, and countless nooks in Scotland beloved of Burns and Scott, or in England's classic lake country, to whom those lovely scenes would be unknown if they were not associated with hours of delight or consolation drawn from a cherished volume! Sometimes these shrines are not on by-ways, but on high-roads of travel, and people pass them, in haste to reach the great city to which they are bound. Do not the great majority of tourists, who have no object but pleasure, look wistfully at the spires of Canterbury and Amiens without stopping, merely because Paris or London is on their ticket? A human interest

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would make many stop who rush past the glorious cathedrals with only a backward glance.

On the great Paris, Lyons, and Mediterranean line there is a station called Vienne, at which express trains do not stop and at which few passengers get in or out: these are soldiers or priests whose duty holds them to the place, or small citizens going to or from Lyons, the neighboring capital, on business or pleasure, which are not active pursuits at Vienne. At long intervals of years, perhaps, a traveler comes to honor the memory of a man, once powerful and celebrated, who lived and died there more than thirteen centuries ago, and who would be forever famous if his immortal bequest to literature had not been kept secret by his heirs. Twenty years ago, by chance, and no credit to myself, I became familiar with his name and works, laid up safe from disturbance in a fine copy of the Bibliothecæ Veterum Patrum (ed. Gallandus), in the Astor Library.[1] My interest in him has only grown stronger with time, and lately, finding myself within an hour's journey of his home and burial-place, I gave a day to pay him the tribute of a visit.

The railway follows the Rhone as it emerges from the granite embankments which keep it within bounds at Lyons, and rushes along, wide, swift, and brimful, but not imposing. The level strips on each bank are disfigured by the rich industries of Lyons, silk manufactories and glass-works, and by the common necessities of a large town, brick-yards, lime-kilns, gravel-pits, and with iron sidings and switches, freight-cars, rails, sleepers, and other material and refuse of a railway. Nature survives only in cabbage gardens, pollard willows, and poplar-trees clipped into liberty-poles. As in most of the main river-valleys of France, the land on each side rises in regular ridges, parallel with the stream, called *côtes;* below Lyons they are far withdrawn from the Rhone, and their surface is treeless, broken up into small properties, and thickly peppered with insignificant modern towns and villages. As the distance from Lyons increases the scenery improves. There are spongy meadows, where the poplars and willows flourish unshorn, composing those landscapes of which a school of French painters have found the picturesque and poetic view. Osier islands rise in the eddies of the river. The sharp, horizontal line of the *côte* dips now and then, giving outlet to a pretty valley, behind which faint, opaque mountain slopes are to be divined. Two long tunnels shut out the light, and then the train stops at the unpretending station of Vienne. Here, on one side, the hills overhang the railway, so that they require to be propped by huge granite bulwarks like fortifications; but the grapes ripen peacefully above them on the sun-baked steeps, yielding the generous, fruity wine called Côte Rôti.

While the train, in no haste to be gone, blocked the way, I looked at my fellow-travelers on the platform. They were for the most part humdrum, rustic or provincial; but a touch of the picturesque and unforeseen is seldom wanting in any group on the continent of Europe, and in this there were two fresh-faced, black-robed young priests, and two bronzed, careworn Arabs in dingy white burnooses and dark red leather leggings, gilt and embroidered. The

[1] The Astor Library also contains the same author's works in J P. Migne's Patrologia Cursus Completus, wherein it is stated that they were "edited with great care and pains *Jacobi Sirmondi Parisiis Anno 1653.*"

Mr. W. H. Kirk, of Philadelphia, to whom the writer is indebted for valuable assistance, found an old volume of the fourth edition of the Bib. Vet. Pat., published in Paris 1624, in the Ridgway Library. It contains some of Avitus's poems, in which, however, many passages read differently from this edition of 1653, and is so full of typographical errors as to suggest the probability that the later edition, though not wholly free from them, was corrected from original manuscripts.

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sons of Ishmael were climbing into a third-class compartment, with no help from the occupants, who protested by word and deed against the Oriental luggage, a big, coarse sack which looked as if it might hold a decapitated body. When the track was clear, I found that there were no cabs at the station, or in all Vienne, and that the only omnibus was for the exclusive service of the one hotel. However, it was easy to see that the town was not large, and might, with a few directions, be visited on foot. I accosted the young priests, and the venerable name which had brought me there served as a passport and letter of introduction. One of them spoke English, and he said that they were professors at a seminary, where the professor of rhetoric would be glad to tell me all that there was to know. The professor received me in the monastic parlor, with the usual ugly carpet and devotional colored prints on the walls. He was kind and obliging. The visit was short but friendly, and I set forth to see the town under the guidance of the young professor of geometry, who spoke English well enough, but whose unpracticed ear soon forced us to fall back upon French.

Vienne is one of those ancient theatres of great dramas which, deserted by actors and audience, have not only fallen into decay, but shrunk in dimensions. It was a place of note when Julius Cæsar invaded Gaul, and Roman poets of later times called it "opulenta Vienna" and "pulchra Vienna;" its streets were then paved with mosaic, and its stately limits reached far into the fields and vineyards of the present day, where vestiges of them are to be found. It was the nursery of Western Christianity, and the cathedral town of an archiepiscopal see; in the middle of the fifth century it was a seat of learning. The conquering Burgundians made it their capital when they were little better than a horde of barbarians, and in the Middle Ages it was the residence of the Dukes of Burgundy, whose eldest son was styled Dauphin, with the second title of Count du Viennois. In the middle of the fourteenth century, after more than three hundred years of independent sovereignty, Humbert II., then Count du Viennois, saw his line cut off by the death of his only son, a baby, who jumped from his nurse's arms, out of a window, into the river below. The father, heart-broken, made over his fair province to the kingdom of France, stipulating that the heir to the throne should bear the title of Dauphin. Though Vienne ceased to be a ducal court, its ecclesiastical importance was undiminished; the council which abolished the order of the Knights Templars sat there in 1311 and 1312, and it remained an archbishopric until the Revolution. To-day it is a staid little provincial town, with no church magnate except a *curé*, and in which the state is probably represented by no higher dignitary than a mayor. In three directions it looks on vine-clad slopes tufted with bunches of trees, and in the fourth towards the Rhone, bending broadly under wooded hillsides with the suave dignity of the Hudson. A wide walk, shaded by sycamores, in the middle of the principal streets is the only modern attempt at embellishment. Here and there a fragment of old building juts out from the commonplace architecture, old-fashioned without being old, and marks periods of past grandeur. There is a handsome Gothic doorway and part of a stately old portal belonging to the former archiepiscopal palace. At another point, a deep-vaulted arch and gateway, over which projects a round turret from an adjoining wall, recall some of the picturesque remnants of old Paris; this effect is accidentally due to the juxtaposition of an old abbatial edifice and the ancient entrance to the forum of Roman times. Of the Gallic origin of Vienne I saw but one reminiscence, — a drinking-shop with the sign Bar des Allobroges. Beside the nineteenth-century

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suspension bridge over the Rhone, where the tributary Gère pours in its waters, a ruined tower rises in mid-flood, of the same epoch as a castle on the hill-top above the town. They are morsels of Vienne's mediæval accoutrement, mere shells, in which even legend scarcely finds foothold.

A Grecian temple, built by Latin masons and dedicated to Augustus and Livia, has fared better than the less ancient remains, though it is not in perfect preservation; the Ionic portico and pediments sculptured against the hot blue sky thrill one with a sudden vision of imperial Rome. She is represented, too, *in the museum, by some relics of newly* christened paganism, such as are to be found throughout Gallo-Roman towns, and of which the chief collection is in the Lateran: broken mosaics of familiar designs, — Ganymede and the eagle, a crane swallowing a serpent, a stag browsing, a greyhound in a leash framed in a pattern of a double cord intertwined; common Roman pottery and iridized glass vessels; capitals of pillars; tragic masks in stone; imperfect inscriptions; bronzes cankered by rust and verdigris, — nothing of much value or merit. The best work of art is a beautiful Renaissance bust, in *alto-rilievo*, of a woman sleeping or in a gentle swoon.

These treasures are well lodged in the light, roomy apartments of a long, low, gray building, apparently a former convent, which had entirely lost the Roman science of drainage, with a two-story arcade running the whole length of the front. I summoned the janitor from his midday meal, that second breakfast so prized by Latin races. He came with so much alacrity and good-will that I expressed a hope that he was not often called from table to show the museum. "Only yesterday," he said, with a smile. "Indeed! And were they foreigners or Frenchmen?" "Americans," he said. Americans! bless their hearts — and heads! Who were they, what brought them there?

The museum forms one side of a square in which there is a monument with a bronze sitting figure. Grateful at not being confronted by an allegorical female or by a rampant Napoleonic marshal, I stopped to read the inscription. The statue was of Ponsard, the poet and playwright, a Viennois, author of Honneur et Argent, Lucrèce, and other plays, who will be hailed by any reader old enough, if such there be, to remember Mademoiselle Rachel in Horace et Lydie, a bewitching little piece dramatized from Horace's Ode IX. Book 3. *He has a refined and pensive face, and* looks as if he had previsions of oblivion.

The ecclesiastical monuments of Vienne are still her greatest ornaments. The cathedral is dedicated to the warlike St. Maurice. It is a fine specimen of sixteenth-century Gothic, nobly placed at the head of a wide street sloping to the river, and approached by a very high, broad, triple granite staircase leading to a spacious stone terrace with an open-work parapet, on which the main doors of the cathedral open. This beautiful church, which would be the boast of many a capital city, has had a hard fate. A quarter of a century after it was completed it fell into the rough hands of the Baron des Adrets, and was abominably mutilated by his Huguenot soldiery. What they spared, or what was restored by the piety and pride of the Viennois, underwent harder usage a hundred years ago from the *sans-culottes*. Statues and carving have been mercilessly torn away, mullioned windows plugged with brick and mortar, the rich, sculptured surfaces ground down by desecration. A feature which struck my uneducated eye as unusual and very pleasing was an exterior colonnade along the side wall, with windows opening into the church, corresponding to the clerestory within; above it there is a cornice of tracery and heads, of the utmost variety of grotesque type

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and grimace. The interior is Pointed Gothic of the finest proportions, soaring and solemn, with an effect of closing in towards the choir, which seems to symbolize the withdrawal of the soul into its sacred places of meditation and prayer.

St. Maurice, though beautiful and impressive, is a work of comparatively modern times. The real Christian landmark of Vienne is St. Pierre, one of the oldest Romanesque churches in France, if not the very oldest, parts of which date from the Merovingian era. The preference for one architectural style over the rest is eminently a question of temperament. To many people the Romanesque, with its large simplicity and unity of design, its solid front and rectangular towers, its round arches and widely spaced pillars, seems better fitted for worship than any other. To one of this mind the lofty massiveness of St. Pierre, its well-lighted breadth, deep, rich color, fine, serious decoration, with its tradition of earliest antiquity, will appeal profoundly as the truest expression of a religious purpose, and give it rank, even in its dilapidation and desecration, by that grand example of Christian building, St. Ambrose at Milan. The desecration is at an end; the much-abused atheistical government, notwithstanding its empty treasury, is restoring the church for a museum of the Christian relics which have been found in Vienne, and the tombs and mural tablets of which St. Pierre was full. The most memorable of these, with its inscription, has disappeared, but a walled-up chapel beside the apse is known to contain the dust and ashes of a great man and a genius, to whom posterity owes Paradise Lost.

The accusation of making free with other people's verse has often been brought against England's greatest poet. The charge was last made by the Rev. George Edmundson, who in his very interesting volume on Milton and Vondel has brought to light another unacknowledged debt. The passages given from the Dutch author, which are translated with spirit and felicity, and generally with fidelity, establish Vondel's title to genius of the first order; they set him beside Milton, and there is no higher place in modern poetry. They also annul the claims of many of Milton's supposed creditors, transferring them to the list of Vondel's debtors. It is incomprehensible that in all which had hitherto been written about Milton and his borrowing Vondel should practically have been overlooked, but it is still more strange that nobody has yet named the original source whence the poets of the seventeenth century drew, who sang the revolt of the angels or the fall of man, — a source to which Vondel owed more than any of them.

The clue to its discovery was tangled among the skeins of truth from which Lauder wove his web of lies; but he missed the thread, nor has Mr. Edmundson found it. Lauder made his attacks upon the memory of Milton nearly a hundred and fifty years ago, and there are probably few readers of Paradise Lost in the present generation who have even heard of those once notorious forgeries. Lauder was a Scotchman, born early in the last century, who, after holding positions in the University of Edinburgh and the public school of Dundee, went to London about 1746, and became editor of the Gentleman's Magazine. In that periodical he published a number of articles accusing Milton of plagiarism, with a long list of sixteenth and seventeenth century authors, British, Dutch, German, French, Italian, and Spanish, from whom the ideal plan and chief beauties of Paradise Lost had been borrowed. These essays he subsequently published collectively under the title of Milton's Use and Imitation of the Moderns. Most of the works referred to by Lauder were poems, and in Latin, according to the custom of the times, but some of them had been

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translated into English. Lauder gave analyses of them, with extracts and the dates of publication, beginning at 1514 and coming down to 1655, ten years before the first appearance of Paradise Lost.

At first Lauder's accusations gained credit, the more readily that Milton's free, unacknowledged use of the ancients had been brought to notice in print not long before. It was incontestable that a great many poems or dramas on the fall of the angels and man, and kindred subjects, had been composed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and that some of Lauder's pretended quotations corresponded word for word with passages in Paradise Lost. But doubts soon arose. Lauder was challenged to show the books which he cited. He produced several of them, but the most important author, Masenius, was missing, and Lauder could only assert that he must have dropped the volume in the street. Startling inaccuracies and interpolations were discovered in his extracts from the authors at hand, however, and the story of the lost book was repeated with derision. The tide turned against him, and he was overwhelmed by the testimony of contemporary scholars, from the elegant animadversions of Hayley to the fulminations of Dr. Johnson, originally a victim to the fraud. Lauder was crushed and silenced for the moment, but after a time he began to opine that his case was not so bad as it had seemed, — which was true in so far as Milton was concerned. He renewed his attack in a pamphlet entitled The Grand Impostor Detected, or Milton's Forgery against Charles I. He did himself no good by this, and was forced to leave England. He went to Barbadoes, where he opened a school, and died there obscurely in 1771.

The contempt into which Lauder has fallen may be gauged by the fact that while the Rev. John Henry Todd, in his early editions of the Poetical Works of John Milton, devotes above twenty pages to exposing the forgeries, Professor David Masson, in the preface to his edition of Milton's poems, does not even name Lauder's pamphlet, and dismisses other investigations of Milton's indebtedness to previous authors, ancient or modern, with one or two exceptions, as "laborious nonsense." Lauder's ingenious and learned libel has been relegated to the cabinet of literary curiosities, and his memory to the shelf for the fossils of venomous reptiles. Yet there once lived a sacred poet, of whom Lauder never heard, the knowledge of whose works would have supplied him with a more formidable weapon against Milton than those which he altered to his hand to give his stabs more force.

This writer was Avitus, Bishop of Vienne at the close of the fifth century. He was known throughout Christendom during his life and for a hundred years or more afterwards, but his fame was lost in the abyss of the dark ages. It was recovered, by scholars at least, as early as the sixteenth century, for Grotius, Du Bartas, and Masenius certainly were familiar with his poems; so, probably, were all the authors on the long list compiled by Lauder, except perhaps the imitators of Vondel; but the latter has followed Avitus so closely that it is difficult to say who copied the Dutch poet and who copied his master. Not one of them appears to have given Avitus credit for their inspiration, and the silence of Milton consigned him a second time to oblivion. His very name is almost lost: I have not found it in any English biographical dictionary, nor in the learned Bayle, nor in Châteaubriand's Génie du Christianisme, nor in any edition of Milton, English, French, German, or Italian, except the Rev. Mr. Todd's, of 1809, who quotes a single passage from the poems, second hand from Bowles, with one or two inaccurate details, on the same authority. His allusion to Avitus as a poet is the only one I have found

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in any English writer except Dean Milman, who mentions his compositions in a manner which betrays little acquaintance with them. He is not named in the eight volumes of Professor David Masson's noble study of the Life of Milton, nor in the late Professor Mark Pattison's book on the same subject. M. Guizot gives a short account of the man and his writings in the Histoire de la Civilisation en France, with which the gentlemen just named, professors of rhetoric and literature in English universities, might have been expected to be familiar. Mr. Hodgkin, who in his leisure hours writes tomes on the Invaders of Italy, heavy only to the hand, knows Avitus as churchman and statesman, but says nothing about him as a man of letters; yet it is as such that he has the highest claim to be remembered.

Alcimus Ecdicius Avitus was born in Auvergne about 450 A. D., of a noble senatorial family, the members of which for generations had held important posts at Rome and in Gaul. He was probably a near kinsman of the Emperor Avitus, whose short, inglorious reign belied his early promise. Sidonius Apollinaris, prefect of Rome and afterwards Bishop of Clermont, a dignified figure among the politicians and poetasters of the decadence, was apparently his brother-in-law. The villa of Sidonius in Auvergne was called the Avitiacum. The owner has left a charming description of it, with the life he led there, translated for us by Mr. Hodgkin in his Invaders of Italy. Miss Preston made an excursion thither a year or two ago, and told of it in her scholarly, graceful style in these pages. Whatever the degree of relationship between Alcimus Avitus and these magnates, he was the fourth bishop of his family, and succeeded to the see of Vienne about the year 490.

The bishop of such a place at such a time could not fail to have his hands full. At this period Gaul was gathering herself together after the ravages of barbarous hordes, and was about to grow into a kingdom under the warlike domination of the first Merovingians; the great chiefs who have become heroes of legend and epic — Attila the Hun, Theodoric the Goth, Clovis the Frank — were sweeping over Europe, pulling down and setting up monarchies; the expiring power of Rome was being revived by Justin and Justinian in the East; the blood of the martyrs had scarcely dried from the arenas of Lyons, Orange, Nîmes, and Arles; royal brides, Clotilde, Radegonde, Bathilde, moved like celestial apparitions among the fierce courts they had come to christianize; the schisms of the Church were already setting up pope and antipope; the great theological parties of Arianism and orthodoxy, descending to the use of political recruits and material weapons, were seeking a battle-field on which the creed of Christendom was to be decided for a thousand years. No man of the time was more identified with the cause of orthodoxy than Avitus. He shared with St. Remigius the glory of converting Clovis, and had the undivided honor of bringing Sigismund, king of the Burgundians, from the errors of Arianism into the pale of the Church. He exerted his utmost powers to convert Gundobald, the father and predecessor of Sigismund, and to that end wrote him many controversial epistles. He was long in friendly communication with the elder king, who, although a heretic, was by no means indifferent to doctrinal questions; and at his request Avitus composed treatises against the Nestorian and Eutychian heresies and the errors of Faustus of Riez. But the unyielding heterodoxy of the Burgundian wore out the patience of the churchman, strong in the support of Clovis. A deputation of bishops, with Avitus at their head, held a conference with Gundobald at Lyons, hoping to overwhelm him by their united arguments. The king, a man of great intelligence, met the reasoning of his learned visitors

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with a shrewdness and subtlety equal to their own: the discussion lasted for days. He remained contumacious, and they threatened him, as a last resort, with an invasion by the Franks. The old chronicle dwells on the humility of demeanor, the angelic sweetness of face and speech, of the Beatus Avitus during the interview; but as the king's firmness was not shaken by menaces, the bishop put his last argument into force, and hurled the victorious Franks upon the kingdom of Burgundy, into which they carried the true form of faith with fire and sword. Gundobald refers to this with cutting irony in a short letter to Avitus, remarkable from a man of his age and nation, not to say life, for in some respects Gundobald was a mere savage: —

"Lord Gundobald, the king, to Avitus, Bishop of Vienne.

"I have thought it expedient to consult your holiness as to the right reading of an extract from the prophets, which I subjoin. Will you deign to declare whether the times referred to are past or to come? 'The law shall go forth of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem: and He shall judge among many people and rebuke strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up the sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree: and none shall make them afraid.'"

Gundobald remained true to his convictions, and he became tributary to the Franks; but his son and successor, Sigismund, publicly renounced the faith of his father, and Arianism was subdued in Burgundy.

Meanwhile, the Bishop of Vienne was exerting his energy in other directions, and leading a life of extraordinary activity in ecclesiastical affairs, politics, and literature. Nearly a hundred letters are extant among his published works, addressed to popes, bishops, and prelates of less degree, to emperors, kings, prefects, senators, and other *viri illustres*. Some of these epistles were written by him for Sigismund and other distinguished persons to the Pope, the Emperor, and various potentates, temporal and spiritual. Among his correspondence are several letters to the rebel Vitalianus, the orthodox rival of Anastasius, Emperor of the East; for Avitus, like many other saints, had no scruples about stirring up a believing servant against an unbelieving master, showing how early the practice of the Church diverged from apostolic teaching on this head, at least. He assisted at the baptism of Clovis, and wrote an account of it which was pronounced to be *elegantissimus*. He wrote constantly against the heresies of which the age was so prolific; he used his influence, all-powerful in Gaul and potent at Rome, against the antipope Laurentius, and to good purpose; and he devoted himself to a grand task, the reconciliation of the Eastern and Western branches of the Church. Complimentary letters from two popes, Symmachus and Hormisdas, attest the value which was set upon his services. Yet he was as active in his own diocese as if he had no broader interests; fulfilling his episcopal duties, visiting the different towns and preaching in their churches, convening councils and presiding over them. In the midst of this full and busy existence he found time for writings which would be thought a good life's work had the author spent his days in a cloister. Besides the letters above mentioned, he has left sermons; the canons of the Council of Epaona, which he drew up; a mass of controversial matter; homilies on St. Paul's Epistles, which might have been entitled Tracts for the Times, being chiefly directed against the growth of liberal ideas; poems on portions of the Old and New Testament, and a poem in praise of virginity dedicated to one

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Fuscina. "Dignissima virgo, soror Fuscina," he styles her; himself, "Frater Alcimus." Whether the titles sister and brother are to be taken literally is rendered doubtful by the introduction of one word, "Deo," — "Fuscina, my sister in God;" just as his relationship to Sidonius Apollinaris, to whom his poem on Genesis is dedicated, is made uncertain by the words "frater Domino Sancto in Christo." There are letters from St. Avitus, as it is proper to call him, to an Apollinaris who seems to have been his brother in the flesh, but it is not clear whether this last and Sidonius Apollinaris, the author, prefect, patrician, and Bishop of Clermont, who died about the date of Avitus's accession to the mitre, were one and the same person. The question is more interesting as regards Fuscina, because of the tender and touching manner in which St. Avitus commonly speaks of Eve throughout his poem on Genesis, although once, in a hasty moment, he terms her "primæva virago." Perhaps he knew women only through this beloved sister, for, whatever their relationship, the dedication of the poem declares that she was beloved. It is not impossible that he was married, like his father and grandfather, both Bishops of Vienne, though it is improbable, as he had been destined to holy orders from childhood. But his private life has disappeared in the publicity which involved him. He died A. D. 525, aged, it is supposed, seventy three or four.

This is all that can be gathered about Avitus, as a man, from the published documents to which I have had access, and it is time to come to the poem which justifies the title of the present article. It is divided into five books, upon the creation, the fall of man, his punishment, the deluge, and the departure of Israel from Egypt. The first three constitute a trilogy, and are more interdependent than the rest. De Initio Mundi begins with an apostrophe to Adam, very different, on the whole, from Milton's sublime exordium, yet with obvious similarity of thought and expression. Resisting the temptation of rendering the Latin hexameters into English blank verse, which, however poor, enhances the resemblance to Paradise Lost unfairly, I give a literal prose translation: —

"I lay to thy charge, O first father, who didst engraft the seeds of death on the vital germ of thy lapsing progeny, whatever drives the human race to its manifold labors, the brief duration of mortal existence, whatsoever taint vitiates our first impulses, the strange doom that overtook our first parent, and all the evil which is added by our own act to his guilt, with loss of his pristine rank. And albeit Christ in himself freed the offshoots from that which it had contracted from the smitten stock, yet the crime of our progenitor abides, who brought on us the penalty of death and transmitted disease and dissolution to his posterity, a fatal sore in sinful flesh."

We have here, as in Milton, man's first disobedience, death, and all our woes and loss of Eden, and the antithesis between Adam and Christ.

In Paradise Lost, two books are devoted to the fallen angels and their council. Avitus proceeds at once to the creation: —

"Already the almighty Father, by the weight of his word, as in a balance, divided the assembled waters from the dry land, compelling the ocean within its shores, the rivers to their banks."

"The Eternal . . .
Flung forth in Heav'n his golden scales,
. . . . . .
Wherein all things created first he weigh'd."

To follow the parallel paths of Milton and Avitus where both are following the narrative of Genesis might seem unfair, unless every coincidence of phrase and metaphor could be given. This is not within my limits, and one or two

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examples must stand for scores. I cite a few passages in the original to show the constant use which Milton, in his latinized style, made of the very words of Avitus: —

"Protinus in varias animalia multa figuras
Surgurent, et vacuum discurrunt bruta per orbem:
Elatæ in altum volucres, motuque citato
Pendentes secuere vias, et in aëre sudo
Præpetibus librant membrorum pondere pennis.
Post etiam clausi vasto sub gurgite pisces
Respirant lymphis, flatuque sub æquore ducunt.
. . . . . .
Nec minus in pelago viviscunt grandia cete
Accipiuntque cavis habitacula digna latebris
Et quæ monstra soret rarus nunc prodere pontus,
Aptat ad informes condens sollertia formas.
. . . . . .
Tum pater omnipotens æterno lumine lætum
Contulit ad terras sublimi ex æthere vultum,
Illustrans quodunque videt: placet ipse meuti
Artifici factura suo, laudatque creator
Disposito pulchra quem condidit ordine mundum."

"Innumerous living creatures, perfect forms,
Limb'd and full grown; out of the ground uprose,
As from his lair, the wild beast where he wons
In forest wild."
"The egg, that soon
Bursting with kindly rupture forth disclos'd
Their callow young; but feather'd soon and fledge
They summ'd their pens, and soaring th' air sublime
With clang despis'd the ground. . . .
. . . . . .
. . . The air
Floats, as they pass, fann'd with unnumbered plumes.
. . . . . .
. . . They . . .
. . . rising on stiff pennons tower
The mid aerial sky."

"Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay,
With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals
Of fish . . .
. . . . . .
. . . The seal
And bended dolphins play; part huge of bulk
Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,
Tempest the ocean. There Leviathan,
Hugest of living creatures . . .
. . . . . .
. . . at his gills
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea."

"Here finished he, and all that he had made
View'd, and behold, all was entirely good:
. . . . . .
Up to the Heav'n of heav'ns, his high abode,
Thence to behold this new-created world,
Th' addition of his empire, how it show'd
In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
Answering his great idea."

St. Avitus's account is more succinct than Milton's, and sometimes follows a different order; but notwithstanding the occasional inversion, the latter's descriptions are paraphrases when they are not literal translations. Milton never misses a happy expression; if he passes it in its place, he makes use of it afterwards. The bishop gives the creation of grass in one beautiful line: —

"Pulchra repentimo vestita est gramine tellus;"

of which Milton's lovely version is, —

"Earth
. . . . . .
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad
Her universal face with pleasant green."

Like the cunning workman that he is, inlaying and encrusting his handicraft with every precious bit that comes in his way, Milton embodies the same line and another equally charming, —

"Perpetuo viret omne solum, terræque tepentis
Blanda nitet facies," —

in this, and in a less exquisite passage:

"Earth in her rich attire
Consummate lovely smiled."

It may be objected that both poets have a common model, which would account for these resemblances, but there are many where no hint is taken from the Biblical text, as will be shown.

Milton's digressions begin sooner than the bishop's, who proceeds from the creation of the world immediately to the

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formation of man, according to Genesis, but the parallel continues in the seventh book of Paradise Lost. Man's prerogative of walking erect is made a point of by both Milton and his precursor, his gift of reason, and his power to read the signs of the weather and changes of the season, none of which are specified in Genesis.

"Who, not prone
And brute as other creatures, but endu'd
With sanctity of reason, might erect
His stature, and upright with front serene
Govern the rest."

"Heav'n
Is as the book of God before thee set,
Wherein to read his wondrous works."

To avoid the slow march of Latin hexameters, I revert to the literal prose translation: "To whom it is permitted, erect, to dominate the prone beasts with his visage, . . . he shall receive the privilege of lifting his face toward the sky. . . . He shall number the stars and know the lights and paths of heaven. . . . Imbued with wisdom, he shone with the pure light of reason." Avitus has a singular and remarkable touch in his rendering of the divine project for Adam's creation: he is to be formed in the image of the Highest and in his likeness, "inwardly in his beautiful soul." There was ground in this, as in other of the bishop's fancies, for impeaching his orthodoxy, if he had not been above attack. More than fifty lines are devoted to the making of man, with an ingenuous display of anatomical knowledge, no doubt uncommon for the times. Then man inhales the breath of life and becomes a living soul, his first act being to get upon his feet. "He rose, steadied his feet on their even soles, then wondered at the various earthly species and at the heavenly bodies."

"By quick instinctive motion up I sprung,
As thitherward endeavoring, and upright
Stood on my feet; about me round I saw
. . . . . .
Creatures that liv'd and mov'd, and walk'd or flew."

The Creator tells man that the realm he beholds and its inhabitants are subject to him, and bids him be thankful and adore. "All they shall pay service to thee, but thou to me," — a fine sentence, suggesting by its form several of Milton's. A deep sleep falls upon Adam, which Avitus describes in measures too melodious to omit: —

"Interea sextus noctis primordia vesper
Retulit, alterno depellens tempore lucem:
Dumque petunt dulcem spirantia cuncta quietem,
Solvitur et somno laxati corporis Adam.
Cui pater omnipotens pressum per corda soporem
Jecit et immenso tardavit pondere sensus,
Vis ut nulla queat sopitam solvere mentem.
Non si forte fragor securas verberat aures
Nec si commoto cœlum tunc intonet arx,
Sed nec pressa manu rupuissent membra quietem."

Every school-boy will remember the analogous passages in Paradise Lost, in the seventh and eighth books. The first twilight descends and the first stars arise upon mortal vision. The thought of sleep and repose was intimately blessed to the bishop; his poem abounds in soothing lines and sweet verses which convey the grateful sense of quiet, calm, and rest, and exhale like sighs from the turmoil of a perpetual activity. He does not linger by the sleeping Adam, but briefly relates the creation of woman. This event he illustrates by a startling comparison, the first of many, betraying the rage for symbols and parallels which began with the earliest writers on Christianity, derived probably from the Neoplatonists, and which unhappily has not yet abated among theologians. St. Avitus likens the sleep of Adam, in which he gained Eve, to the death of Christ, who was wounded in his side, and after a short sleep in the tomb arose to wed his bride, the Church. The nuptial benediction on the first human pair, the invitation to use and enjoy everything in the garden except one forbidden tree, occur as in Genesis, Avitus and Milton

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both marking the impression made on Adam by the interdiction uttered "voce terribili." The paraphrast here breaks into a eulogy upon marriage, which rouses curiosity as to whether it was the result of fortunate experience or of the proverbial *omne ignotum*. It winds up as follows: "He ordained joyful marriage, and commanded the angelic hymn to be sung, wedded to harmony. Paradise was their bridal chamber, the world was given them in dower, and the stars rejoiced with gladsome flames."

"And happy constellations on that hour
Shed their selectest influence . . .
. . . . . .
And heav'nly quires the hymenæan sung."

The remainder of the first book, De Initio Mundi, is devoted to the site of Eden, to the garden, and to the race whose later habitation Avitus places near that lost abode. As he leaves the Old Testament for a while, to indulge his imagination, the similarity to Milton is more striking and significant, and holds through at least a hundred lines. The skeptical reader is referred to the fourth, fifth, and seventh books of Paradise Lost for a metrical translation of the following extracts, which might be extended to thrice their length, if space allowed, without losing the beauty or the likeness. Throughout Milton's Eden we are wandering in a blissful maze, constantly meeting Avitus or his footprints. "There is a garden beneath the eastern zenith, hidden by Nature deep in her secret holds, where the dawn rising with the birth of the sun strikes on the neighboring Ind. . . . There is the brow of the world, where it is said earth and sky meet. There stands a grove shut within an everlasting barrier on a height inaccessible to mortals. . . . There no fog rises with the season's change, nor do scorching suns return after frost when the high zodiac brings back fierce summer, nor do the fields grow hoary with thickening rime. The clemency of heaven maintains perpetual spring; the stormy north wind keeps aloof, but in the limpid atmosphere the melting clouds disperse beneath the vault. Nature neither seeks nor gains relief from showers, but the contented plants receive their share of dew. The universal soil is always green, and the bland face of earth forever smiles. . . . Whatsoever growth is missed by us, as the year speeds its course, here blooms or ripens every month. Here grow the spices by false report misnamed Sabæan. . . . Here the boughs distill fragrant balm. . . . Here, if perchance the wind should sigh lightly with gentle breath and soft whisper, the thick-leaved forest trembles, and hardy bloom and sweet odors are scattered abroad. Here a resplendent fountain rises from a transparent depth, brighter than silver, nor does crystal sparkle with a cooler sheen. The banks glitter with green pebbles, and what the vain mind of man esteems as jewels are here strewn about like stones. The meadows have varied hues. . . . A river flows down from the forest, and divides the fields with its fourfold stream. . . . These, men call Tigris and Euphrates, which set a boundary to the far-reaching frontier of the arrow-bearing Parthian."

The onward river leads the learned bishop into "many a famous realm and country," a long way from his subject, "whereof here needs no account," says Milton, for once shunning the snare. Avitus undeniably inclines too much to what has been termed geographical poetry in his imitator. In the present instance the temptation comes from the Nile, one of the four rivers of Paradise: he gives a spirited and graphic description of the annual inundation, with many striking lines and incidents, which Milton transfers to his vision of the deluge. After this excursion he returns to Eden, where Adam and Eve are listening to God's paternal instructions as to their mode of life; these being ended, "the Father joyfully remounted to heaven's starry court."

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The first book of the Latin poem closes with God's ascent to heaven. The second, De Originali Peccato, opens with the happy life of the new human creatures. They do not find the necessity for work to enhance their enjoyment which Milton ascribes to them, a noteworthy difference between the plain-bred English Puritan and the Gallo-Roman prelate. The luxury, rank, and culture to which Avitus was born had no doubt taught him, industrious as he was, a truth rediscovered by Mr. Lowell, — that the highest proof of civilization is to do nothing gracefully; and this grace he bestows on our first parents in their simplicity. But not Milton's first parents were more diligent in their culling and grafting than he in picking out and appropriating every charming word in which their innocent idleness is described.

"Facilis custodia recti est," said the Creator, as he laid the one restriction, but the eternal mystery of the fall remains unexplained. The bishop, in the midst of his sonorous numbers and flowing measures, bursts into a diatribe against wedlock, which he avers to be the cause of "grumbling, strife, fear, guile, wrath, grief, deceit, complaints, jealousy, discord." In Paradise Lost Adam charges to it "anger, hate, mistrust, suspicion, discord." Milton's prejudice against matrimony is well known, though it did not prevent his trying the experiment three times; the causes of the bishop's are recondite, and made more perplexing by his previous panegyric on the holy estate. He nearly loses breath in the vehemence of his objurgations; but there is no time to dwell on the inconsistency, for Satan now comes upon the scene.

"He had once been an angel . . . who shone first in the rank of created beings."

> "His form had not yet lost
> All her original brightness, nor appear'd
> Less than Archangel ruin'd."

> "Cloth'd with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
> Myriads."

Having lost his high place in heaven by pride and presumption, he has turned his celestial powers to working evil. He can assume any shape at will, from his original angelic semblance to that of a wild beast, — a suggestion Milton did not forget in making Satan disguise himself first as a lion, then as a tiger. All forms of seduction are at his disposal; women and gold are specially mentioned, — a hint which was turned to account in Paradise Regained. Envy is the predominating passion of his fallen and vitiated nature, even above hatred or revenge. "He saw in that calm abode the new race leading a safe and happy life, serving the Lord of the universe under accepted law, enjoying tranquil pleasure, all things being subject to them: a spark of jealousy ignited his wrath, and his burning envy kindled a fierce flame. . . . He uttered his complaint from his breast, and gave vent to his murmurs in these words: 'Oh, grief! this hateful race of moulded clay has risen and come forth upon our ruin. I once held the highest rank; now behold me rejected, cast forth, and this clod succeeds to my angelic honors. Earth possesses heaven, kneaded mud reigns in its vile compaction, and the power transferred from us perishes. Yet it has not wholly perished; a mighty portion retains its native force and still preserves the highest power, — to harm. Let me not delay; . . . let the race perish at its source; . . . a withered root will not bear living buds. This wretched comfort still remains to me. If I be unable to scale the heavens again, they shall be barred to these. If this new stuff be destroyed by a like mischance, let it be a comrade in my cutting off, a partner in my punishment. Let it share with me those fires which I foresee.' So spake he, grieving, and groans choked his voice." The familiar parallel pas-

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sages are to be found in Paradise Lost, books first, fourth, and ninth.

Satan assumes the form of a serpent, subtlest of the beasts of the field, and Milton's description of his metamorphose is compared by Lauder with portions of a poem by Grotius, published at the Hague fifty years before Paradise Lost. The identity of both with the corresponding passage in Avitus loses its force from the resemblance of all three to Virgil's monstrous snakes; for the bishop also knew when to borrow. This circumstance would relieve Milton of the charge in this particular instance, if it were not for the stress laid by Avitus as well as by himself on the devil's flattery. The holy man, notwithstanding his tenderness and indulgence to woman, was as thoroughly convinced of her inferiority to man as was the harsh Puritan; they both allege it as Satan's motive for assailing Eve rather than Adam. He accosts her "blandita voce," "fallaci susurro," — a thing so monstrous and portentous in itself that Avitus wonders she was not shocked and forewarned, while Milton adopts the idea, and makes her express surprise at the prodigy.

The serpent's address to Eve in the Latin poem, with the exception of some compliments and the needful adherence to Genesis, differs from the long rhetorical discourse in Paradise Lost, and is very superior to it in beauty and simplicity. The brevity and ingenuousness of Avitus are among his marked advantages over the Puritan, whose personages are all long-winded and casuistical, from the Creator to the snake. The dialogue between Eve and the tempter is direct and natural. "Wrapped about the trunk of a lofty tree with his far-reaching coils,"

("About the mossy trunk I wound me soon,
For high from ground the branches,")

he begins: "'O most beauteous maid, blessed ornament of the world, whose radiant presence is adorned by blushing modesty, future parent of a race, the great globe looks to thee as its mother, thou first, best comfort and delight of man, without whom he would not live: the greater he is, the more he is subject to thy love.'" He asks why she and her husband abstain from the most delicious fruit of the garden, when all that air, earth, and ocean produce belong to them. "'I fain would know who predicts disasters, who envies you those gifts. . . . Thou art terrified, O woman, by an empty name of dread. This penalty of death shall not overtake you; the envious Father could not tolerate an equal lot.'"

"Or is it envy? and can envy dwell
In heavenly breasts?"

Eve listens silently, and answers simply that no one denies or restrains them, but that if they eat they will die; though what to die may be she knows not, and begs her interlocutor, "doctissime serpens, suavibus O pollens coluber dulcis dictis, callidus draco," to explain. The "spirited sly snake" goes on to tell her that it boots her little to behold and possess the world, "yet to dwell imprisoned in the wretched dungeon of a blind mind." The brute creation, he continues, share with her the enjoyment of the senses, the sun shines upon them alike, and eyesight is no distinction between man and beast. Take his counsel, and at the moment that her lips taste the celestial flavor of the forbidden fruit her eyes will become clear, her vision like that of the gods, and she will discern good from evil, right from injustice, truth from falsehood. Eve takes the deadly fruit, turns it over, touches it to her nostrils and to her lips, and "ignorantly trifles with death to come. Oh, how many times did she brush it against her mouth and draw back reluctant! Her hand, shaking with its sinful burden, sometimes drops tremulous and flees before the crime. Yet she desired to be like the gods, and the hurtful venom slowly crept on, with ambition. Contrary impulses snatch her mind this way and that, between desire and fear." A

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simple, pretty picture, such as only a master can give. She does not go through a Puritanical process of ratiocination, but struggles with temptation like a child. The serpent continues to urge and tempt her. "She is beguiled, the deadly venom enters her ears, she accedes to the evil. To satisfy the serpent, she bites the apple and tastes the sweet poison." At this moment she sees Adam "coming joyfully through the grassy fields," and runs to meet him with the bitten apple, "semesum pomum," in her hand, — another touch of masterly simplicity. Instead of the long speeches which Adam and Eve interchange in Paradise Lost, where the man yields not to his own desire, but to a tender and magnanimous resolve to share her fate, the bishop's Eve utters a few words of persuasion, and, childlike still, almost dares him to do it. Adam tastes without much demur. "Then a sudden lightning broke upon them, and shed a mournful glare on their altered gaze. Nature had not made them blind, . . . but now indeed they will be blind."

> "Their eyes how open'd, and their minds
> How darken'd."

St. Avitus concurs with Milton in naming carnal desire as the immediate result of eating the forbidden fruit; but Milton, following the natural order of events, goes on to describe the revulsion and remorse and first estrangement of the guilty pair, while the bishop plunges into an extraordinary dissertation on the remote consequences of the deed. He ascribes to our first parents' fatal curiosity the diseased appetite for all sorts of mysteries and secrets which possesses mankind. Astrology (which Milton makes Gabriel denounce in a discourse of a hundred lines), soothsaying, serpent-charming, even prophecies as to the weather and harvest, are adduced as instances of this sinful and presumptuous tendency. He alludes with great severity to the practice of raising spirits, whereby some dupes imagine that their inquiries can be satisfied, whereas "they are deceived here below, and will be damned hereafter." Still dwelling on the iniquity of inquisitiveness, as the learned bishop himself would say, — for he had the Latin trick of playing upon words, which his illustrious imitator did not escape, — he gives a long account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. There are fine passages, which for want of space cannot be quoted; among others, the description of Lot's wife, in the act of turning to look back, slowly stiffening to a rigid, translucent image of her living self, "a shining horror," well deserves to be given. The secondary moral of the tale is the fallibility of woman; for in this case also the tempter betrayed a daughter of Eve to her doom, but durst not tamper with her husband. The bishop admits, however, that it was probably lucky for Lot that his wife had no time to run forward and tell him what she saw, or he too might have turned back. Avitus was imbued with rabbinical theories of the devil's peculiar influence over the female sex which had been transmitted to the early Church. He closes his digression by an allusion to "the serpent, wont to move the female mind," which brings him back with a twist to Paradise. The ancient enemy is exulting over his victims in an outburst of defiant power: "'Lo, the divine glory of the promised privilege is now yours. Whatever is mine to know, believe me, is now yours. I have led your mind through secret holds. . . . I have taught you to use your left hand as well as your right. Henceforth ye are dedicated to me by a perpetual fate, nor has God more right in you than I. . . . Let him keep what he formed; what I have taught is mine, mine is the larger part. You owe much to the creator, but more to the master.' So saying, he left them shuddering, amid a thick mist, and departed through the vapor, quitting his assumed body."

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"I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth."

"Satan involv'd in rising mist."

"Thus wrapt in mist
Of midnight vapor glides obscure."

So ends the second book of the Latin poem. The third, De Sententia Dei, opens with this exquisite prelude: —

"Tempus erat quo sol medium transcenderat axem
Pronus et excelsi linquens fastigia centri.
Vicina jam nocte leves præmiserat auras."

"Now was the sun in western cadence low
From noon, and gentle airs, due at their hour,
To fan the earth now wak'd, and usher in
The evening cool."

Adam and Eve, hiding from their shame, seek for covering: the fig-tree

"Umbrosis propter stabat ficulnea ramis,
Frondentes diffusa comes,"

"Spreads her arms
Branching so broad and long,"

and supplies them with raiment. The blessed Avitus, unable to hold his hand, continues to point out coincidences: their nakedness came from a tree; a tree furnishes covering for their nakedness; in time to come the wood of a tree will heal the wound made by a tree, for when Christ shall be lifted up, the tree, from being the source of death, will become the cross, the tree of life. It is evident that the legendary history of the cross had already taken shape.

"Meanwhile, the Father was breathing the dewy breezes of the clear air in the mossy ways of the green grove." He calls Adam and Eve, and then man first feels what all mankind must feel when "struck suddenly by lightning from the universal skies, with clanging trump whereby the herald of judgment alarms the smitten globe." This fine sentence is followed by twenty-five lines descriptive of the everlasting fires of hell, — more than enough to prove that from what source soever that doctrine was introduced into Christianity, it was well burnt in before the sixth century. The Judge arraigns Adam, who breaks into an angry complaint against the Creator, the woman, and the married state. The speech is short, but bitter, and contains the germ of Adam's soliloquy after his fall, and of his imprecation on Eve in Paradise Lost, tenth book. The Judge turns to the woman, who humbly owns her temptation and her sin. He then pronounces their sentence. First on the serpent, "to drag along after itself in flexible coils and be bound by living fetters," to be banished from the upper earth for part of the year, to be feared and hated by everybody, to be bruised by the heel of the woman and to bruise her in turn, until at last she shall vanquish the victor, — "victoremque ultima vincat."

"Then verified
When Jesus, son of Mary, second Eve,
. . . . . .
. . . rising from his grave
. . . . . .
Captivity led captive."

The woman's turn comes next, in the terms of Genesis, her sentence ending with the pathetic words: "'Woman, when exhausted by sore travail thou hast brought forth thy cherished offspring with much labor, childless often shalt thou mourn thy fruitless pangs.'" Adam's condemnation is given last, — the curse on the soil, the life of toil, the bestial needs, the doom of death, and a heavier doom: "'Before thy own death thou shalt see thy child perish, and shalt witness thy punishment on thy progeny, that thou mayest better understand the appalling image of death. Thou shalt know what it is to have sinned, what to die, what to weep thy dead.'" The murder of Abel is foretold, which in Paradise Lost Adam beholds in a vision. Thus man learns the full penalty of sin. "The terrified earth heard and was shaken," —

"Earth trembled from her entrails," —

and by the overcasting of the sky, the untimely disappearance of the sun, Nature gives signs of fear and sympathy

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which Milton did not forget. St. Avitus makes short work of the expulsion from Paradise: the guilty pair are clothed in skins and driven forth without more words. Their entrance into the outer world, their homesickness for Eden, their strangeness, their grief with its hitherto unknown burden of tears and sobs, are told in beautiful and moving verses. "They wander through the empty world with hurried steps. Though they see the verdant herbage, the flowery fields, the springs and rivers, they deem the aspect of the earth vile, after the face of Paradise; all that they behold affrights them, according to the wont of man to love what he has lost. . . . The world seems narrow to them, lamenting their forbidden country; . . . they groan for the stars hanging in a remote sky. . . . Then in their grief mingled with angry pain they felt a new sensation, and sobs broke from their throbbing hearts in unexpected torrents, and unbidden tears overflowed their straining cheeks." "Some natural tears they shed," says Milton, but his narrative is cold; Adam's discourse and demeanor are too philosophical, Eve is too elegiac, for the circumstances. In his picture of our first parents leaving Eden, Avitus is truer to nature, to their childlike, inexperienced condition, to their uncontrolled despair. In this episode and elsewhere in the course of the poem, he evinces a repressed melancholy, a sympathy with sinful humanity, a sadness for its fate, restrained by faith, — the moral dejection which has oppressed believing souls in all ages.

He follows Adam and Eve no further. He tells us how the earth straightway brought forth thorns and thistles; how the sky learned to lower and thunder, to pour down rain and hail; how the wild beasts, heretofore gentle and harmless, grew fierce and savage; how disease, war, and violence in every form invaded the world. (*Vide* Paradise Lost, tenth and eleventh books.) The poet adds he could not fitly sing it all, "no, not if one with a hundred tongues or an iron throat should try to recount them, or Mæonius, or him whom Mantua sent should sing with diverse voice," friends whom Milton is fond of mentioning.

After this the bishop sermonizes a little, and introduces the parables of Lazarus and Dives, the Prodigal Son, the Good Shepherd, and the Good Samaritan. The first is a fine paraphrase of a hundred lines or more; it opens with a banquet, which is served up again in Paradise Regained. "When the hour invited to the jovial board the meats came quickly, and all that earth can proffer was brought. The foreign granary sent its wheat; the old Falernian glowed in the cool crystal. Moist cinnamon and incense mixed with aromatic essences perfume the house. Whatever sea or land produces, or the rivers bring forth, the pale and weary slave with a golden rod brings by turn in dishes from every side."

"A table richly spread in regal mode,
With dishes piled and meats of noblest sort
And savor. . . .
. . . All fish from sea or shore
Freshest or purling brook, or shell or fin.
. . . . . .
. . . And winds
Of gentlest gale Arabian odors fann'd
From their soft wings."

St. Avitus moralizes on the parables, and draws a warning from that of Lazarus, connecting it with man's first transgression: "But we, while life lasts, while we are strengthened by light, let us take warning by our forerunner, Adam; while there is a place for repentance, nor yet we vainly beat against gates barred with iron. For we all know the regret of the first man driven from his native home, to which he could never find the way back. He suffered a form of death even in his fall, since by no tears or prayers could he regain that which he had lost." After the parable of the Good Samaritan the bishop finally prays: "Thus, Almighty Father, stretch

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forth thy right hand to us, and let life seek us also out for eternal welfare; may thy prevailing grace restore to the ancient abode those misled by the guile of a perjured malefactor, whom the envious wrath of the enemy drove from Paradise."

With this gentle supplication the story of man's fall comes to an end. But Milton and Avitus do not part company so soon: the former utilizes the magnificent description of the deluge from the fourth book of the Latin poem by bringing it, with happy anachronism, into Adam's vision. There is a strong likeness in both to passages in Virgil and Ovid. Avitus knew his Roman poets well; but there are original strokes in De Diluvio Mundi and in the foregoing inundation of the Nile, not one of which Milton has missed: the sea monsters taking refuge from their ocean homes in the submerged haunts of man; the sun coming forth and reflecting his hot splendor in the water as in a glass, and drinking up the waves "as after thirst;" the receding torrents which turn into an ebbing lake; and last, the dove, a Bible picture which becomes an old mosaic of the Catacombs in the bishop's hands, and which Milton copies faithfully: —

"Illa, memor jussi, rapido petit arva volatu
Paciferumque videns ramum viridantis olivæ.
Decerpit mitique refert rostro."

"A dove, sent forth once and again to spy
Green tree or ground whereon his foot may light;
The second time returning in his bill
An olive-leaf he brings, pacific sign."

The passage of the Red Sea, also witnessed by Adam in his vision, is the subject of Avitus's fifth book. The crowning event is thus related: "The mass, built up by a framework of hanging water, kept the waves suspended in air. God's race elect fleeing, the conqueror pursuing, pass through the midst, planting their feet on land within the borders of the sea, treading on the stones of the deep, and the chariot-wheel crushed the bare clay."

"Pursuing whom he late dismissed, the sea
Swallows him with his host, but them lets pass
As on dry land between two crystal walls,
Awed by the rod of Moses so to stand.
. . . . . .
. . . The race elect
Safe towards Canaan from the shore advance."

In the same book, De Transitu Maris Rubri, there is a grand apparition of the angel of death on the Passover night: "It was night, and all things took their midnight rest, for darkness now divided the measured hours, when, lo, from out the dread silence, with noiseless tread, came the avenging angel with unsheathed sword."

To quote all the remarkable passages, or even the striking single lines, of the poem would require a volume. The above extracts are enough to illustrate its beauty and power and its simplicity, which is a beauty and power in itself. There are proofs in plenty of the bishop's familiarity with the ancients; he made as free with them as later poets have done with him, but in his case it was not done secretly. We do not meet Pan dancing with the Graces in his Garden of Eden, but there is mythological allusion in abundance to certify the churchman's culture centuries after the taste for classic letters had died out in Europe, nearly a thousand years before the Revival, at a time when, as he says, "the pipes resounding the praise of Christ were mute to Apollo." Yet with all that he owed to these masters and to the Old Testament, his poem in its vigor, beauty, pathos, and occasional sublimity is his own. For the conception of this tremendous theme and for his mode of treating it he had no model.

De Initio Mundi is the first of a long series, in every one of which there is internal evidence of the author's acquaintance with it, at least if Lauder's quotations are to be trusted in the least;

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and inasmuch as he knew nothing of that poem they may be trusted as far as regards Avitus. In the Triumphum Pacis, by Staphortius, published at Dort, 1655, there is a eulogy on marriage, in which some of the lines are transcripts from that in De Initio Mundi. Ramsay, whose poem on the fall was published in Edinburgh, 1633, has lines which recall some of Avitus's too strongly for mere coincidence. In the Adamus Exul of Grotius, the similarities are even more frequent and striking to the latter than to the passages in Paradise Lost with which Lauder compares them. But the analogy is most astonishing in Masenius, the poet whom Lauder considered to have been the special model and pattern of Milton, whose existence has been indignantly called in question by his editors. Two lines from Masenius's monologue of Satan suffice to prove that he knew Avitus. "'Heu dolor!'" his Lucifer begins, and after uttering his rage and grief he says: —

"'Quid moror? apta dolus pugnanti subgeret arma,
Simplicitas paret insidiis, via fraudis aperta est.'"

"'Pro dolor!'" cries the bishop's archfiend, and concludes: "'Let me not delay, for now I can encounter them with gentle strife, while pristine innocence and simplicity, ignorant and inexpert in guile, lie open to my weapons.'"

Mr. Edmundson's book makes it probable that the later Dutch and German poets of the seventeenth century followed Vondel, not Avitus, but the point cannot be decided without a comparison of their entire works. At any rate, they were a pack of thieves. At times, before I laid down the volume, I was almost persuaded that Milton knew nothing of De Initio Mundi, but, as in the quotations from Masenius just given, there are situations and locutions too identical to be fortuitous resemblances, such as those in Satan's monologue and in his dialogue with Eve. Stronger still is the evidence gathered from the descriptions of the deluge and of the passage of the Red Sea, of which Mr. Edmundson gives no parallels from Vondel, and which point directly back to the older epic. Had Vondel written in Latin, and not in his mother tongue, the question would be more doubtful, but Milton constantly pays tacit tribute to the bishop's use of language by anglicizing his exact words. The excess of latinity in Paradise Lost over the other poems is most likely due to this freedom. The main difference between the epics of Avitus, Vondel, and Milton is the prominence given to Lucifer and to the war in heaven by the last two. But on the whole, after getting over the surprise of making Vondel's acquaintance, one cannot collate the Latin and English poems, observing the similarity of subject, plan, and treatment, the correspondence of important incidents, descriptions, speeches, phrases, the skillful introduction into Paradise Lost of episodes from De Initio Mundi and the succeeding books which do not belong to the story of the fall, and yet doubt Milton's thorough knowledge of the works of Avitus. They relieve Lauder of the charge and deprive him of the credit of inventing Masenius. Moreover, they explode Voltaire's shallow hypothesis, which has obtained such wide and easy credence, that Milton got the idea and inspiration of his epic from a sacred drama by Andreini, a Florentine playwright.

Yet when the utmost has been admitted of Milton's debt to Avitus, no one who reads the whole of De Initio Mundi will attempt to establish its superiority over Paradise Lost as a work of genius. The former contains altogether but about twenty-five hundred lines, while a single book of the other has nearly that number; and although Milton is often cumbrous, prolix, and verbose, which St. Avitus very seldom is, the scope of the English poem is far broader and bolder than that of the Latin

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one. We find there none of the magnificent marshaling of the spirits of light and darkness, nor the sublime portrayal of heaven and hell; not a word of the celestial and infernal hierarchies, nor the delineation of character in angels and demons. The marvelous power of expression which presents at once a vivid picture and a startling idea, such as, —

"On his crest sat horror plumed;"

the axioms condensing the experience of profound wisdom and a devout life; the mastery of language which makes melody of the mere names of men and places, — all these and much more belong to Milton in his own right, unless Vondel can dispute it. His style lacks the simplicity and straightforwardness of the bishop's, who compares fairly well with the classics in this respect; but Avitus sometimes becomes coarse and grotesque in his candor, falling into crudities like those of the early painters. Milton's verse is strung with pearls of phrase, language of such surpassing perfection as no other English author has attained. This is never seen to more advantage than in the passages where the resemblance to Avitus is most striking; paraphrase or translation, it is always felicitous.

Milton had a lofty, serene consciousness of supremacy. Why did he announce himself as undertaking

"Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme"?

In view of his familiarity with Avitus, the claim is audacious, not to say mendacious. He considered, perhaps, that the ground was covered by his observation in Eiconoclastes: "Borrowing, if it be not bettered by the borrower, among authors is accounted plagiarie." M. Guizot, in reference to Avitus, says that Milton could afford to imitate, for he could create. In this view there may be a Protestant's indulgence for the great Puritan poet; a Roman Catholic would probably judge him more severely. Without theological partiality, one cannot but ask, How could he stoop to rob the forgotten dead? He has rifled a venerated tomb. Let us forbear to push the accusation. Mr. Edmundson takes the right stand in calling his book "a curiosity of literature." It is enough for one man to have tried to blacken and belittle the author of Paradise Lost; and inasmuch as Lauder never heard of De Initio Mundi in this life, there can be no more fitting punishment for his fraud and malignity than to lift up his eyes and behold the blessed Avitus in Abraham's bosom.

There is consolation in remembering that although posterity has been ungrateful to the memory of the Bishop of Vienne, he was famous, revered, and beloved in his own time. His position was second to none except the Pope's throughout Christendom. When he died, full of years and honors, his praises were sounded by his contemporaries, and numerous writers of the next century sustained the eulogium. Gregory of Tours, Fortunatus in his life of St. Martin, St. Isidore of Seville, and other illustrious ecclesiastical authors extol the eloquence, piety, orthodoxy, talents, learning, keen wit, and poetical gifts of Avitus. Adonis, Bishop of Vienne in the sixth century, refers to his predecessor's epitaph as the best summary of his life and works. That long laudatory versified composition concludes thus: "He overcame by his wit, virtue, and wisdom, by exhortation, by warnings. He was pre-eminent in everything that he did. No orator was equal to him, nor any poet. His voluminous writings proclaim that he lived, that he lives yet, and that he shall live through all ages to come."

Alas for the blessed Avitus and his elegist! But there is satisfaction in reviving his memory for an hour.

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ECHO-SONG.

I.

Who can say where Echo dwells?
In some mountain-cave, methinks,
Where the white owl sits and blinks;
Or in deep sequestered dells,
Where the foxglove hangs its bells,
Echo dwells.
Echo!
Echo!

II.

Phantom of the crystal Air,
Daughter of sweet Mystery!
Here is one has need of thee;
Lead him to thy secret lair,
Myrtle brings he for thy hair —
Hear his prayer,
Echo!
Echo!

III.

Echo, lift thy drowsy head,
And repeat each charmèd word
Thou must needs have overheard
Yestere'en, ere, rosy-red,
Daphne down the valley fled —
Words unsaid,
Echo!
Echo!

IV.

Breathe the vows she since denies!
She hath broken every vow;
What she would she would not now —
Thou didst hear her perjuries.
Whisper, whilst I shut my eyes,
Those sweet lies,
Echo!
Echo!

Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

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THE TRAGIC MUSE.

XXXVIII.

PETER SHERRINGHAM would not for a moment have admitted that he was jealous of Nick Dormer, but he would almost have liked to be accused of it; for this would have given him an opportunity to declare, with plausibility, that so uncomfortable a passion had no application to his case. How could a man be jealous when he was not a suitor; how could he pretend to guard a property which was neither his own nor destined to become his own? There could be no question of loss when one had nothing at stake, and no question of envy when the responsibility of possession was exactly what one prayed to be delivered from. The measure of one's susceptibility was one's pretensions, and Peter was not only ready to declare over and over again that, thank God, he had none; his spiritual detachment was still more complete — he literally suffered from the fact that the declaration was but little elicited. He connected an idea of virtue and honor with his attitude; for surely it was a high example of conduct to have quenched a personal passion for the sake of the public service. He had gone over the whole question at odd, irrepressible hours; he had returned, spiritually speaking, the buffet administered to him, in a moment, that day in Rosedale Road, by the spectacle of the *crânerie* with which Nick could let worldly glories slide. Resolution for resolution, he preferred, after all, another sort, and his own crânerie would be shown in the way he should stick to his profession and stand up for British interests. If Nick had leaped over a wall he would leap over a river. The course of his river was already traced and his loins were already girded. Thus he was justified in holding that the measure of a man's susceptibility was a man's attitude: that was the only thing he was bound to give an account of.

He was perpetually giving an account of it to his own soul, in default of other listeners. He was quite angry at having tasted a sweetness in Miriam's assurance, at the carriage door, bestowed indeed with very little solemnity, that Nick did n't care for her. Wherein did it concern him that Nick cared for her or that Nick did n't? Wherein did it signify to him that Gabriel Nash should have taken upon himself to disapprove of a union between the young actress and the young painter, and to frustrate an accident that might perhaps be happy? For those had also been cooling words, at the hour, though Peter blushed, on the morrow, to think that he had perceived in them anything but Nash's personal sublimity. He was ashamed of having been refreshed, and refreshed by so sickly a draught, because it was his theory that he was not in a fever. As for keeping an eye on Nick, it would soon become clear to that young man and that young man's charming friend that he was too much engrossed with other matters to do anything of the sort. Nick and Miriam and Gabriel Nash could straighten out their complications according to their light. He would never speak to Nick of Miriam; he felt, indeed, just now as if he should never speak to Nick of anything. He had traced the course of his river, as I say, and the real proof would be the way he should fly through the air. It was a case for action — for vigorous, unmistakable action. He had done very little since his arrival in London but moon round a *fille de théâtre* who was taken up partly, though she bluffed it off, with another man, and partly with arranging new petticoats for a beastly

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old "poetic drama;" but this little waste of time should instantly be made up. He had given himself a certain rope, and he had danced to the end of his rope, and now he would dance back. That was all right — so right that Sherringham could only express to himself how right it was by whistling gayly.

He whistled as he went to dine with a great personage, the day after his meeting with Nick in Balaklava Place; a great personage to whom he had originally paid his respects — it was high time — the day before that meeting, the Monday of that week. The sense of omissions to repair, of a superior line to take, perhaps made him study with more intensity to please the personage, who gave him ten minutes and asked him five questions. A great many doors were successively opened before any palpitating pilgrim who was about to enter the presence of this distinguished man; but they were discreetly closed again behind Sherringham, and I must ask the reader to pause with me at the nearer end of the momentary vista. This particular pilgrim fortunately felt that he could count upon being recognized not only as a faithful if obscure official in the great hierarchy, but as a clever young man who happened to be connected by blood with people his lordship had intimately known. No doubt it was simply as the clever young man that Peter received the next morning, from her ladyship, a note asking him to dine on the morrow. He had received such cards before, and he always responded to the invitation they embodied: he did so, however, on the present occasion, with a sense of unusual intention. In due course his intention was translated into words: before the gentlemen left the dining-room he took the liberty of asking his noble host if during the next few days there would be three minutes more that he might, in his extreme benevolence, bestow upon him.

"What is it you want? Tell me now," his lordship replied, motioning to the rest of the company to pass out and detaining Peter in the dining-room.

Peter's excellent training covered every contingency: he could be concise or diffuse, as the occasion required. Even he himself, however, was surprised at the quick felicity of the terms in which he was conscious of conveying that if it were compatible with higher conveniences he should peculiarly like to be transferred to duties in a more distant quarter of the globe. Indeed, though Sherringham was fond of thinking of himself as a man of emotions controlled by training, it is not impossible that there was a greater candor than he knew in the expression of his face and even the slight tremor of his voice as he presented this petition. He had wished extremely that his manner should be good in doing so, but perhaps the best part of it, for his interlocutor, was just the part in which it failed — in which it confessed a secret that the highest diplomacy would not have confessed. Sherringham remarked to the minister that he did n't care in the least where the place might be, nor how little coveted a post; the further away the better, and the climate did n't matter. He would only prefer, of course, that there should be really something to do, although he would make the best of it even if there were not. He stopped in time, or at least he thought he did, not to appear to suggest that he covertly sought relief from the misery of a hindered passion in a flight to latitudes unfavorable to human life. His august patron gave him a sharp look which, for a moment, seemed the precursor of a sharper question; but the moment elapsed and the question did not come. This considerate omission, characteristic of a true man of the world, and representing quick guesses and still quicker indifferences, made Sherringham from that moment his lordship's ardent partisan. What did come was a good-natured laugh and the ex-

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clamation, "You know there are plenty of swamps and jungles, if you want that sort of thing." Sherringham replied that it was very much that sort of thing he did want; whereupon his lordship continued, "I 'll see — I 'll see: if anything turns up, you shall hear."

Something turned up the very next day: our young man, taken at his word, found himself indebted to the post for a large, stiff, engraved official letter, in which the high position of minister to the smallest of Central American republics was offered to him. The republic, though small, was big enough to be "shaky," and the position, though high, was not so exalted that there were not much greater altitudes above it to which it was a stepping-stone. Sherringham took one thing with another, rejoiced at his easy triumph, reflected that he must have been even more noticed at headquarters than he had hoped, and, on the spot, consulting nobody and waiting for nothing, signified his cordial acceptance of the place. Nobody with a grain of sense would have advised him to do anything else. It made him happier than he had supposed he should ever be again; it made him feel, professionally, in the train, as they said in Paris; it was serious, it was interesting, it was exciting, and Sherringham's imagination, letting itself loose into the future, began once more to scale the crowning heights. It was very simple to hold one's course if one really tried, and he blessed republics and the torrid zone. A further communication informed him that he would be expected to return to Paris, for a short interval, a week later, and that he would before that time be advised of the date at which he was to proceed to his remoter duties.

XXXIX.

The first thing Peter now did was to go and see Lady Agnes Dormer; it is not unworthy of note that he took, on the other hand, no step to make his promotion known to Miriam Rooth. To render it more probable he should find her he went at the luncheon-hour; and she was indeed on the point of sitting down to that repast with Grace. Biddy was not at home — Biddy was never at home now, her mother said: she was always at Nick's place, she spent her life there, she ate and drank there, she almost slept there. What she found to do there, in so many hours, or what was the irresistible spell, Lady Agnes could not pretend that she had succeeded in discovering. She spoke of this baleful resort only as "Nick's place," and she spoke of it at first as little as possible. She thought it very probable, however, that Biddy would come in early that afternoon: there was something or other, some common social duty, that she had condescended to promise she would perform with Grace. Poor Lady Agnes, whom Sherringham found in a very grim yet very tremulous condition (she assured her visitor her nerves were all gone), almost abused her younger daughter for two minutes, having evidently a deep-seated need of abusing some one. I must add, however, that she did n't wait to meet Grace's eye before recovering, by a rapid gyration, her view of the possibilities of things — those possibilities from which she still might squeeze, as a mother, the drop that would sweeten her cup. "Dear child," she had the presence of mind to add, "her only fault is, after all, that she adores her brother. She has a capacity for adoration, and must always take her gospel from some one."

Grace declared to Peter that her sister would have stayed at home if she had dreamed he was coming, and Lady Agnes let him know that she had heard all about the hour he had spent with the poor child at Nick's place, and about his extraordinary good-nature in taking the two girls to the play. Peter lunched in

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Calcutta Gardens, spending an hour there which proved at first unexpectedly and, as it seemed to him, unfairly dismal. He knew from his own general perceptions, from what Biddy had told him and from what he had heard Nick say in Balaklava Place, that Lady Agnes would have been wounded by her son's apostasy; but it was not till he saw her that he appreciated the dark difference this young man's behavior had made in the outlook of his family. Evidently that behavior had, as he phrased it, pulled the bottom out of innumerable private calculations. These were things that no outsider could measure, and they were none of an outsider's business; it was enough that Lady Agnes struck him really as a woman who had received her death-blow. She looked ten years older; she was white and haggard and tragic. Her eyes burned with a strange intermittent fire which made him say to himself that her children had better look out for her. When they were not filled with this unnatural flame they were suffused with comfortless tears; and altogether the afflicted lady was very bad — very bad indeed. It was because he had known she would be very bad that he had, in his kindness, called upon her in exactly this manner; but he recognized that to undertake to be kind to her in proportion to her need might carry one very far. He was glad he himself had not a wronged, mad mother, and he wondered how Nick Dormer could endure the home he had ruined. Apparently he did n't endure it very much, but had taken definitive and highly convenient refuge in Rosedale Road.

Peter's judgment of his young kinsman was considerably confused, and a sensible element in it was the consciousness that he was perhaps just now not in the best state of mind for judging him at all. At the same time, though he held, in general, that an intelligent man had a legible warrant for doing as he liked, he could scarcely help asking himself whether, in the exercise of a manly freedom, it had been absolutely indispensable that Nick should work such domestic woe. He admitted, indeed, that this was an anomalous vision of Nick, as the worker of domestic woe. Then he saw that Lady Agnes's grievance (there came a moment, later, when she asserted as much) was not quite what Nick, in Balaklava Place, had represented it — with questionable taste, perhaps — to a mocking actress; was not a mere shocked quarrel with his adoption of a "low" career, or a horror, the old-fashioned horror, of the strange licenses taken by artists under pretext of being conscientious: the day for this was past, and English society thought the brush and the fiddle as good as anything else, with two or three exceptions. It was not what he had taken up, but what he had put down, that made the sorry difference, and the tragedy would have been equally great if he had become a wine-merchant or a horse-dealer. Peter had gathered at first that Lady Agnes would not trust herself to speak directly of her trouble, and he obeyed what he supposed to be the best discretion in making no allusion to it. But a few minutes before they rose from luncheon she broke out, and when he attempted to utter a word of mitigation there was something that went to his heart in the way she returned, "Oh, you don't know — you don't know!"

He perceived Grace's eyes fixed upon him at this instant with a look of supplication, and he was uncertain as to what she wanted — that he should say something more to console her mother or should hurry away from the subject. Grace looked old and plain and (he had thought, on coming in) rather cross, but she evidently wanted something. "You don't know," Lady Agnes repeated, with a trembling voice — "you don't know." She had pushed her chair a little away from the table; she held her

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pocket-handkerchief pressed hard to her mouth, almost stuffed into it, and her eyes were fixed upon the floor. She made him feel as if he did know — knew what towering piles of confidence and hope had been dashed to the earth. Then Lady Agnes finished her sentence, unexpectedly: "You don't know what my life with my husband was." Here, on the other hand, Peter was slightly at fault — he did n't exactly see what her life with her husband had to do with it. What was clear to him, however, was that they literally had looked for the very greatest things from Nick. It was not quite easy to see why this had been the case — it had not been precisely Sherringham's own prefigurement. Nick appeared to have had the faculty of communicating that sort of faith to women; he had originally given Julia a tremendous dose of it, though she had since shaken off the effects.

"Do you really think he would have done such great things, politically speaking?" Peter inquired. "Do you consider that the root of the matter was in him?"

Lady Agnes hesitated a moment, looking rather hard at her visitor. "I only think what all his friends — all his father's friends — have thought. He was his father's son, after all. No young man ever had a finer training, and he gave, from the first, repeated proof of having the highest sort of ability, the highest sort of ambition. See how he got in, everywhere. Look at his first seat — look at his second," Lady Agnes continued. "Look at what every one says at this moment."

"Look at all the papers!" said Grace. "Did you ever hear him speak?" she asked. And when Peter reminded her that he had spent his life in foreign lands she went on, "Well, you lost something."

"It was very charming," said Lady Agnes quietly.

"Of course he is charming, whatever he does," Peter rejoined. "He 'll be a charming artist."

"Oh, heaven!" groaned Lady Agnes, rising quickly.

"He won't — that 's the worst," Grace amended. "It is n't as if he 'd do things people would like. I 've been to his place, and I never saw such a horrid lot of things — not at all clever or pretty."

"You know nothing whatever about the matter!" Lady Agnes exclaimed, with unexpected asperity. Then she added, to Peter, that, as it happened, her children did have a good deal of artistic taste; Grace was the only one who was totally deficient in it. Biddy was very clever — Biddy really might learn to do pretty things. And anything the poor child could learn was now no more than her duty — there was so little knowing what the future had in store for them all.

"You think too much of the future — you take terribly gloomy views," said Peter, looking for his hat.

"What other views can one take, when one's son has deliberately thrown away a fortune?"

"Thrown one away? Do you mean through not marrying" —

"I mean through killing, by his perversity, the best friend he ever had."

Sherringham stared a moment; then, with laughter, "Ah, but Julia is n't dead of it!"

"I 'm not talking of Julia," said Lady Agnes, with a good deal of majesty. "Nick is n't mercenary, and I 'm not complaining of that."

"She means Mr. Carteret," Grace explained. "He would have done anything, if Nick had stayed in the House."

"But he 's not dead?"

"Charles Carteret is dying," said Lady Agnes — "his end is very, very near. He has been a sort of providence to us — he was Sir Nicholas's second self. But he won't stand such nonsense, and that chapter 's closed."

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"You mean he nas dropped Nick out of his will?"

"Cut him off utterly. He has given him notice."

"The old scoundrel! But Nick will work the better for that — he 'll depend on himself."

"Yes, and whom shall *we* depend on?" Grace demanded.

"Don't be vulgar, for God's sake!" her mother ejaculated, with a certain inconsequence.

"Oh, leave Nick alone — he 'll make a lot of money," Peter declared cheerfully, following his two companions into the hall.

"I don't in the least care whether he does or not," said Lady Agnes. "You must come up-stairs again — I 've lots to say to you yet," she went on, seeing that Peter had taken his hat. "You must arrange to come and dine with us immediately; it 's only because I 've been so steeped in misery that I did n't write to you the other day — directly after you called. We don't give parties, as you may imagine, but if you 'll come just as we are, for old acquaintance' sake" —

"Just with Nick — if Nick will come — and dear Biddy," Grace interposed.

"Nick must certainly come, as well as dear Biddy, whom I hoped so much to find," Peter rejoined. "Because I 'm going away — I don't know when I shall see them again."

"Wait with mamma. Biddy will come in, now, at any moment," Grace urged.

"You 're going away?" asked Lady Agnes, pausing at the foot of the stairs and turning her white face upon him. Something in the tone of her voice showed that she had been struck by his own tone.

"I have had promotion, and you must congratulate me. They are sending me out as minister to a little hot hole in Central America — five thousand miles away. I shall have to go rather soon."

"Oh, I 'm so glad!" Lady Agnes breathed. Still she paused, at the foot of the stair, and still she gazed.

"How very delightful, because it will lead, straight off, to all sorts of other good things!" Grace exclaimed.

"Oh, I 'm crawling up, and I 'm an excellency," Peter laughed.

"Then, if you dine with us, your excellency must have great people to meet you."

"Nick and Biddy — they are great enough."

"Come up-stairs — come up-stairs," said Lady Agnes, turning quickly and beginning to ascend.

"Wait for Biddy — I 'm going out," Grace continued, extending her hand to her kinsman. "I shall see you again — not that you care; but good-by now. Wait for Biddy," the girl repeated, in a lower tone, fastening her eyes on his with the same urgent, mystifying gleam that he thought he had perceived in them at luncheon.

"Oh, I 'll go and see her in Rosedale Road," he answered.

"Do you mean to-day — now?"

"I don't know about to-day, but before I leave England."

"Well, she 'll be in immediately," said Grace. "Good-by to your excellency."

"Come up, Peter — *please* come up," called Lady Agnes, from the top of the stairs.

He mounted, and when he found himself in the drawing-room with her, with the door closed, she told him that she was exceedingly interested in his fine prospects, that she wished to hear all about his new position. She rang for coffee, and she indicated the seat he would find most comfortable; he had for a moment an apprehension that she would tell him he might, if he liked, light a cigar. For Peter Sherringham had suddenly become restless — too restless to occupy a comfortable chair; he seated himself in it only to jump up again,

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and he went to the window — while he communicated to his hostess the very little that he knew about his prospective post — on hearing a vehicle drive up to the door. A strong light had just been thrown into his mind, and it seemed to grow stronger when, looking out of the window, he saw Grace Dormer issue from the house in a bonnet and jacket which had all the air of having been assumed with extraordinary speed. Her jacket was unbuttoned, her gloves were dangling from her hand, and she was tying her bonnet-strings. The vehicle into which she hastily sprang was a hansom-cab which had been summoned by the butler from the doorstep, and which rolled away with her after she had given the cabman an address.

"Where is Grace going in such a hurry?" he asked of Lady Agnes; to which she replied that she had not the least idea — her children, at the pass they had all come to, knocked about as they liked.

Peter sat down again; he stayed a quarter of an hour, and then he stayed longer, and during this time his appreciation of what Lady Agnes had in her mind gathered force. She showed him clearly enough what she had in her mind, although she showed it by no clumsy nor reprehensible overtures. It looked out of her sombre, conscious eyes and quavered in her preoccupied, perfunctory tones. She manifested an extravagant interest in his future proceedings, the probable succession of events in his career, the different honors he would be likely to come in for, the salary attached to his actual appointment, the salary attached to the appointments that would follow — they would be sure to, would n't they? — and what he might reasonably expect to save. Oh, he must save — Lady Agnes was an advocate of saving; and he must take tremendous pains, and he must get on and be clever and ambitious; he must make himself indispensable and rise to the top. She was urgent and suggestive and sympathetic; she threw herself into the vision of his achievements and emoluments as if to satisfy a little the sore hunger with which Nick's treachery had left her. This was touching to Peter Sherringham, and he did not remain unmoved even at those more importunate moments when, as she fell into silence, fidgeting feverishly with a morsel of fancy-work that she had plucked from a table, her whole presence became an intense repressed appeal to him. What that appeal would have been had it been uttered was: "Oh, Peter, take little Biddy; oh, my dear young friend, understand your interests at the same time that you understand mine; be kind and reasonable and clever; save me all further anxiety and tribulation and accept my lovely, faultless child from my hands."

That was what Lady Agnes had always meant, more or less, that was what Grace had meant, and they meant it with singular lucidity on the present occasion. Lady Agnes meant it so much that from one moment to another Peter scarcely knew what she might do; and Grace meant it so much that she had rushed away in a hansom to fetch her sister from the studio. Grace, however, was a fool, for Biddy certainly would n't come. The news of his promotion had set them off, adding brightness to their idea of his being an excellent match; bringing home to them sharply the sense that if he were going away to strange countries he must take Biddy with him — that something at all events must be settled about Biddy before he went. They had suddenly begun to throb with the conviction that they had no time to lose.

Strangely enough, the perception of all this had not the effect of throwing Peter on the defensive, or at least of making him wish to bolt. When once he had discovered what was in the air he recognized a propriety, a real felicity in it; could not deny that he was, in certain

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ways, a good match, since it was quite probable he would go far; and was even generous enough (as he had no fear of being dragged to the altar) to enter into the conception that he might offer some balm to a mother who had had a horrid disappointment. The feasibility of marrying Biddy was not exactly augmented by the idea that his doing so would be a great offset to what Nick had made Lady Agnes suffer; but, at any rate, Peter did not dislike his strenuous companion so much as to wish to punish her for being strenuous. He was not afraid of her, whatever she might do; and though he was unable to grasp the practical relevancy of Biddy's being produced on the instant he was willing to linger for half an hour on the chance of her turning up.

There was a certain contagion in Lady Agnes's appeal — it made him appeal sensibly to himself. For, indeed, as it is time to say, the glass of our young man's spirit had been polished for that reflection. It was only at this moment that he became really candid with himself. When he made up his mind that his only safety was in flight, and took the strong measure of asking for assistance to flee, he was very conscious that another and probably still more effectual safeguard (especially if the two should be conjoined) lay in the hollow of his hand. Julia Dallow's words in Paris had come back to him, and had seemed much wiser than when they were spoken: "She 'll save you disappointments; you would know the worst that can happen to you, and it would n't be bad." Julia had put it into a nutshell — Biddy would probably save him disappointments. And then she was — well, she was Biddy. Peter knew better what that was since the hour he had spent with her in Rosedale Road. But he had brushed away the sense of it, though he was aware that in doing so he took only half measures, was even guilty of a sort of fraud upon himself. If he was sincere in wishing to put a gulf between his future and that portion of his past and present which was associated with Miriam Rooth, there was a very simple way to do so. He had dodged that way, dishonestly fixing upon another which, taken alone, was far from being so good; but Lady Agnes brought him back to it. She held him in magnanimous contemplation of it, during which the safety, as Julia had called it, of the remedy became fascinating to his mind, especially as that safety appeared not to exclude a concomitant sweetness. It would be simple and it would swallow up his problems; it would put an end to all alternatives, which, as alternatives were otherwise putting an end to him, would be an excellent thing. It would settle the whole question of his future, and it was high time this should be settled.

Peter took two cups of coffee while he made out his future with Lady Agnes, but though he drank them slowly he had finished them before Biddy turned up. He stayed three quarters of an hour, saying to himself that she would n't come — why should she come? Lady Agnes said nothing about this; she really, in vulgar vocables, said nothing about any part of the business. But she made him fix the next day but one for coming to dinner, and her repeated declaration that there would be no one else, not another creature but themselves, had almost the force of a legal paper. In giving his word that he would come without fail, and not write the next day to throw them over for some function that he should choose to dub obligatory, Peter felt quite as if he were putting his name to such a document. He went away at half past three; Biddy, of course, had n't come, and he had been certain she would n't. He could n't imagine what Grace's idea had been, nor what pretext she had put forward to her sister. Whatever it had been, Biddy had seen through it and hated such machi-

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nations. Peter could only like her the better for that.

XL.

Lady Agnes would doubtless have done better, in her own interest or in that of her child, to have made sure of Peter's company for the very next evening. This she had indeed attempted, but the plan had succumbed to difficulties. Peter had a theory that he was inextricably engaged; moreover her ladyship could not take upon herself to answer for Nick. Of course they must have Nick, though, to tell the truth, the hideous truth, she and her son were scarcely upon terms. Peter insisted on Nick; he wished particularly to see him; and he gave his hostess notice that he would make each of them forgive everything to the other. Lady Agnes declared that all her son had to forgive was her loving him more than her life, and she would have challenged Peter, had he allowed it, on the general ground of the comparative dignity of the two arts of painting portraits and governing nations. Peter declined the challenge; the most he did was to intimate that he perhaps saw Nick more vividly as a painter than as a governor. Later he remembered vaguely something Lady Agnes had said about their being a governing family.

He was going, by what he could ascertain, to a very queer climate, and he had many preparations to make. He gave his best attention to these, and for a couple of hours after leaving Lady Agnes he rummaged London for books from which he might extract information about his new habitat. It made apparently no great figure in literature, so that Peter could reflect that he was perhaps destined to find a salutary distraction in filling the void with a volume of impressions. After he had gathered that there were no books he went into the Park. He treated himself to an afternoon or two there when he happened to drop upon London in the summer; it refreshed his sense of the British interests he would have to stand up for. Moreover, he had been hiding more or less, and now all that was changed, and this was the simplest way not to hide. He met a host of friends, made his situation as public as possible, and accepted on the spot a great many invitations; all subject, however, to the mental reservation that he should allow none of them to interfere with his being present the first night of Miriam's new venture. He was going to the equator to get away from her, but, to break with the past with some decency of form, he must show an affected interest, if he could muster none other, in an occasion that meant so much for her. The least intimate of her associates would do that, and Peter remembered that, at the expense of good manners, he had stayed away from her first appearance on any stage. He would have been shocked if he had found himself obliged to go back to Paris without giving her his personal countenance at the imminent crisis, so good a right had she to expect it.

It was nearly eight o'clock when he went to Great Stanhope Street to dress for dinner and learn that a note which he found on the hall table, and which bore the marks of hasty dispatch, had come in three or four hours before. It exhibited the signature of Miriam Rooth and informed him that she positively expected him at the theatre at eleven o'clock the next morning, for which hour a dress rehearsal of the revived play had been hurriedly determined upon, the first night being now definitely fixed for the impending Saturday. She counted upon his attendance at both ceremonies, but she had particular reasons for wishing to see him at the rehearsal. "I want you to see and judge and tell me," she said, "for my mind 's like a flogged horse — it won't give another kick." It was for the Satur-

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day he had made Lady Agnes his promise; he had thought of the possibility of the play in doing so, but had rested in the faith that, from valid symptoms, this complication would not occur till the following week. He decided nothing on the spot in relation to the conflict — it was enough to dash off three words to Miriam to the effect that he would sooner perish than fail her on the morrow.

He went to the theatre in the morning, and the episode proved curious and instructive. Though there were twenty people in the stalls it bore little resemblance to those *répétitions générales* to which, in Paris, his love of the drama had often attracted him, and which, taking place at night, in the theatre closed to the public, are virtually first performances with invited spectators. They were, to his sense, always settled and stately, and were rehearsals of the *première* even more than rehearsals of the play. The present occasion was less august; it was not so much a concert as a confusion of sounds, and it took audible and at times disputatious counsel with itself. It was rough and frank and spasmodic, but it was vivid and strong, and, in spite of the serious character of the piece, often exceedingly droll; and it gave Sherringham, oddly enough, a livelier sense than he had ever had of bending over the hissing, smoking, sputtering caldron in which an adequate performance is cooked. He looked into the gross darkness that may result from excess of light; that is, he understood how knocked up, on the eve of production, every one concerned in the preparation of a play might be, with nerves overstretched and glasses blurred, awaiting the test and the response, the echo to be given back by the big, receptive, artless, stupid, delightful public. Sherringham's interest had been great in advance, and as Miriam, since his arrival, had taken him much into her confidence he knew what she intended to do and had discussed a hundred points with her. They had differed about some of them, and she had always said, "Ah, but wait till you see how I shall do it at the time!" That was usually her principal reason and her most convincing argument. She had made some changes at the last hour — she was going to do several things in another way. But she wanted a touchstone, she wanted a fresh ear, and, as she told Sherringham when he went behind after the first act, that was why she had insisted on this private performance, to which a few fresh ears were to be admitted. They did n't want to let her have it — they were a parcel of donkeys; but as to what she meant, in general, to have, she had given them a hint which she flattered herself they would n't soon forget.

Miriam spoke as if she had had a great battle with her fellow-workers and had routed them utterly. It was not the first time Sherringham had heard her talk as if such a life as hers could only be a fighting life, and as if she frankly recognized the fine uses of a faculty for making a row. She rejoiced that she had this faculty, for she knew what to do with it; and though there might be arrogance and swagger in taking such a stand in advance, when one had done the infinitely little that she had done, yet she trusted to the future to show how right she should have been in believing that a pack of idiots would never hold out against her, would know that they could n't afford to. Her assumption, of course, was that she fought for the light and the right, for the good way and the thorough, for doing a thing properly if one did it at all. What she had really wanted was the theatre closed for a night, and the dress rehearsal, put on for a few people, given instead of Yolande. That she had not got, but she would have it the next time. She spoke as if her triumphs behind the scenes, as well as before, would go by

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leaps and bounds, and Sherringham perfectly believed, for the time, that she would drive her coadjutors in front of her like sheep. Her tone was the sort of thing that would have struck one as preposterous if one did n't believe in her; but if one did believe in her it only seemed thrown in with the other gifts. How was she going to act that night, and what could be said for such a hateful way of doing things? She asked Sherringham questions that he was quite unable to answer; she abounded in superlatives and tremendously strong objections. He had a sharper vision than usual of the queer fate, for a peaceable man, of being involved in a life of so violent a rhythm; one might as well be hooked to a Catharine-wheel and whiz round in flame and smoke.

It was only for five minutes, in the wing, amid jostling and shuffling and shoving, that they held this conference. Miriam, splendid in a brocaded anachronism, a false dress of the beginning of the century, and excited and appealing, imperious and reckless and good-natured, full of exaggerated propositions, supreme determinations, and comical irrelevancies, showed as radiant a young head as the stage had ever seen. Other people quickly surrounded her, and Sherringham saw that though she wanted a fresh ear and a fresh eye she was liable to tell those who possessed these advantages that they did n't know what they were talking about. It was rather hard with her (Basil Dashwood let him into this, wonderfully painted and in a dress even more beautiful than Miriam's — that of a young dandy of the ages of silk): if you were not in the business you were one kind of donkey, and if you *were* in the business you were another kind. Sherringham noted with a certain displeasure that Gabriel Nash was not there; he preferred to believe that it was from this observation that his annoyance happened to come when Miriam, after the remark just quoted from Dashwood, laughing and saying that at any rate the thing would do because it would just have to do, thrust vindictively but familiarly into the young actor's face a magnificent feather fan. "Is n't he too lovely," she asked, "and does n't he know how to do it?" Basil Dashwood had the sense of costume even more than Sherringham supposed, inasmuch as it now appeared that he had gone profoundly into the question of what his clever comrade was to wear. He had drawn patterns and hunted up stuffs, had helped her to try on her clothes, had bristled with ideas and pins. It is not perfectly easy to explain why Sherringham grudged Gabriel Nash the cynicism of his absence; it may even be thought singular that he should have missed him. At any rate he flushed a little when Miriam, of whom he inquired whether she had n't invited her oldest and dearest friend, exclaimed, "Oh, he says he does n't like the kitchen fire — he only wants the pudding!" It would have taken the kitchen fire to account, at that moment, for the red of Sherringham's cheek; and he was indeed uncomfortably heated by helping to handle, as he phrased it, the saucepans.

This he felt so much after he had returned to his seat, which he forbore to quit again till the curtain had fallen on the last act, that, in spite of the high beauty of that part of the performance of which Miriam carried the weight, there was a moment when his emancipation led him to give a suppressed gasp of relief, as if he were scrambling up the bank of a torrent after an undue immersion. The girl herself, at any rate, as was wholly right, was of the incorruptible faith; she had been saturated to good purpose with the great spirit of Madame Carré. That was conspicuous as the play went on and she watched over the detail with weary passion. Sherringham had never liked the piece itself; he thought that, as clumsy in form and false in feeling, it did little

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honor to the British theatre; he hated many of the speeches, pitied Miriam for having to utter them, and considered that, lighted by that sort of candle, the path of fame might very well lead nowhere.

When the rehearsal was over he went behind again, and in the rose-colored satin of the *dénoûment*, the heroine of the occasion said to him, "Fancy my having to drag through that other stuff to-night — the brutes!" He was vague about the persons designated in this allusion, but he let it pass; he had at the moment a kind of detached foreboding of the way any gentleman familiarly connected with Miriam in the future would probably form the habit of letting objurgations and some other things pass. This had become, indeed, now, a frequent state of mind with him; the instant he was before her, near her, next her, he found himself a helpless subject of the spell which, so far at least as he was concerned, she put forth by contact and of which the potency was punctual and absolute; the fit came on, as he said, exactly as some esteemed express train on a great line bangs at a given moment into the station. At a distance he partly recovered himself — that was the encouragement for going to Central America; but as soon as he entered her presence his life struck him as a thing disconnected from his will. It was as if he had been one thing and his behavior another; he had glimpses of pictures of this difference, drawn, as they might be, from the coming years — little illustrative scenes in which he saw himself in strange attitudes of resignation, always rather sad and still, with a slightly bent head. Such images should not have been inspiring, but it is a fact that they were decidedly fascinating. The gentleman with the bent head had evidently given up something that was dear to him, but it was exactly because he had got his price that he was there. "Come and see me three or four hours hence," Miriam said — "come, that is, about six. I shall rest till then, but I want particularly to talk with you. There will be no one else — not the end of any one's nose. You'll do me good." So of course Peter drove up to Balaklava Place about six.

XLI.

"I don't know — I have n't the least idea — I don't care — don't ask me," he broke out immediately, in answer to some question which she put to him, with little delay, about his sense of the way she had done certain things at the theatre. Had she not, frankly, better give up that way and return to their first idea, the one they had talked over so much? Sherringham declared that it was not *his* idea; that, at any rate, he should never have another as long as he lived; and that, so help him heaven, they had talked such things over more than enough.

"You 're tired of me — yes, already," said Miriam, sadly and kindly. They were alone, her mother had not peeped out, and she had prepared herself to return to the theatre. "However, it does n't matter, and of course your head is full of other things. You must think me ravenously selfish — perpetually chattering about my little shop. What will you have when one 's a shop-girl? You used to like it, but then you were n't a minister."

"What do you know about my being a minister?" Sherringham asked, leaning back in his chair and gazing at her from sombre eyes. Sometimes he thought she looked better on the stage than she did off it, and sometimes he thought the exact contrary. The former of these convictions had held his mind in the morning, and it was now punctually followed by the other. In general, as soon as she stepped on the boards a great

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and special alteration took place in her — she was in focus and in her frame; yet there were hours, too, in which she wore her world's face before the audience, just as there were hours when she wore her stage face in the world. She took up either mask as it suited her humor. To-day Sherringham was seeing each in its order, and he thought each the best.

"I should know very little if I waited for you to tell me — that 's very certain," Miriam answered. "It 's in the papers that you 've got a high appointment, but I don't read the papers unless there 's something in them about myself. Next week I shall devour them, and think them driveling too, no doubt. It was Basil Dashwood told me, this afternoon, of your promotion — he has seen it announced somewhere. I 'm delighted if it gives you more money and more advantages, but don't expect me to be glad that you 're going away to some distant, disgusting country."

"The matter has only just been settled, and we have each been busy with our own affairs. Even if you had n't given me these opportunities," Sherringham went on, "I should have tried to see you to-day, to tell you my news and take leave of you."

"Take leave? Are n't you coming to-morrow?"

"Oh, yes, I shall see you through that. But I shall rush away the very moment it 's over."

"I shall be much better then — really I shall," the girl said.

"The better you are the worse you are."

Miriam returned his gaze with a beautiful charity. "If it would do you any good I would be bad."

"The worse you are the better you are!" laughed Sherringham. "You 're a kind of devouring demon."

"Not a bit! It 's you."

"It 's I? I like that."

"It 's you who make trouble, who are sore and suspicious and supersubtle, not taking things as they come and for what they are, but twisting them into a torment and a misery. Oh, I 've watched you enough, my dear friend, and I 've been sorry for you — and sorry for myself; for I 'm not so taken up with myself as you think. I 'm not such a low creature. I 'm capable of gratitude, I 'm capable of affection. One may live in paint and tinsel, but one is n't absolutely without a soul. Yes, I 've got one," the girl went on, "though I do practice my intonations. If what you are going to do is good for you, I 'm very glad. If it leads to good things, to honor and fortune and greatness, I 'm enchanted. If it means your being away always, forever and ever, of course that 's serious. You know it — I need n't tell you — I regard you as I really don't regard any one else. I have a confidence in you — ah, it 's a luxury. You 're a gentleman, *mon bon* — ah, you 're a gentleman! It 's just that. And then you see, you understand, and that 's a luxury too. You 're a luxury altogether, Mr. Sherringham. Your being where I shall never see you is not a thing I shall enjoy; I know that from the separation of these last months — after our beautiful life in Paris, the best thing that ever happened to me or that ever will. But if it 's your career, if it 's your happiness, I can miss you and hold my tongue. I *can* be disinterested — I can!"

"What did you desire me to come for?" Sherringham asked, attentive and motionless. The same impression, the old impression, was with him again; the sense that if she was sincere it was sincerity of execution, if she was genuine it was the genuineness of doing it well. She did it so well now that this very fact was charming and touching. When she asked him, at the theatre, to grant her the hour in the afternoon, she wanted, candidly (the more as she had not seen him at home for several days), to go

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over with him once again, on the eve of the great night (it would be for her second attempt the critics would lie so in wait — the first success might have been a fluke), some of her recurrent doubts; knowing from experience what good ideas he often had, how he could give a worrying alternative its quietus at the last. Then she had heard from Dashwood of the change in his situation, and that had really, from one moment to the other, made her think sympathetically of his preoccupations — led her open-handedly to drop her own. She was sorry to lose him and eager to let him know how good a friend she was conscious that he had been to her. But the expression of this was already, at the end of a minute, a strange bedevilment: she began to listen to herself, to speak dramatically, to represent. She uttered the things she felt as if they were snatches of old play-books, and really felt them the more because they sounded so well. This, however, did n't prevent them from being as good feelings as those of anybody else, and at the moment Sherringham, to still a rising emotion — which he knew he should n't still — articulated the challenge I have just recorded, she seemed to him to have at any rate the truth of gentleness and generosity.

"There 's something the matter with you — you 're jealous," said Miriam. "You 're jealous of Mr. Dormer. That 's an example of the way you tangle everything up. Lord, he won't hurt you, nor me either!"

"He can't hurt me, my dear, and neither can you; for I have a nice little heart of stone and a smart new breastplate of iron. The interest I take in you is something quite extraordinary; but the most extraordinary thing in it is that it 's perfectly prepared to tolerate the interest of others."

"The interest of others need n't trouble it much!" Miriam declared. "If Mr. Dormer has broken off his marriage to such an awfully fine woman (for she is that, your swell of a sister), it is n't for a loud wretch like me. He 's kind to me because that 's his nature, and he notices me because that 's his business; but he 's away up in the clouds — a thousand miles over my head. He has got something 'on,' as they say; he 's in love with an idea. I think it 's a shocking bad one, but that 's his own affair. He 's quite *exalté;* living on nectar and ambrosia — what he has to spare for us poor crawling things on earth is only a few crumbs. I did n't even ask him to come to the rehearsal. Besides, he thinks you 're in love with me, and that it would n't be honorable to cut in. He 's capable of that — is n't it charming?"

"If he were to relent and give up his scruples, would you marry him?" asked Sherringham.

"Mercy, how you talk about marrying!" the girl laughed. "You 've all got it on the brain."

"Why, I put it that way to please you, because you complained to me last year precisely that that was not what seemed generally to be wanted."

"Oh, last year!" Miriam murmured. Then, differently, "Yes, it 's very tiresome!" she exclaimed.

"You told me, moreover, in Paris, more than once, that you would n't listen to anything but that."

"Well, I won't, but I shall wait till I find a husband who 's bad enough. One who 'll beat me, and swindle me, and spend my money on other women — that 's the sort of man for me. Mr. Dormer, delightful as he is, does n't come up to that."

"You 'll marry Basil Dashwood," Sherringham replied.

"Oh, marry? — call it marry, if you like. That 's what poor mother says — she lives in dread of it."

"To this hour," said Sherringham, "I have n't managed to make out what your mother wants. She has so many ideas, as Madame Carré said."

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"She wants me to be a tremendous sort of creature — all her ideas are reducible to that. What makes the muddle is that she is n't clear about the kind of creature she wants most. A great actress or a great lady — sometimes she inclines for one, and sometimes for the other; but on the whole she persuades herself that a great actress, if she 'll cultivate the right people, may *be* a great lady. When I tell her that won't do, and that a great actress can never be anything but a great vagabond, then the dear old thing has tantrums, and we have scenes — the most grotesque: they 'd make the fortune, for a subject, of some play-writing fellow, if he had the wit to guess them; which, luckily for us, perhaps, he never will. She usually winds up by protesting — *devinez un peu quoi!*" Miriam added. And as her companion professed his complete inability to divine, "By declaring that rather than take it that way I must marry *you*."

"She 's shrewder than I thought. It 's the last of vanities to talk about it, but I may mention in passing that if you would marry me you should be the greatest of all possible ladies."

"Heavens, my dear fellow, what natural capacity have I for that?"

"You 're artist enough for anything. I shall be a great diplomatist; my resolution is firmly taken. I 'm infinitely cleverer than you have the least idea of, and you shall be a great diplomatist's wife."

"And the demon, the devil, the devourer and destroyer, that you are so fond of talking about: what, in such a position, do you do with that element of my nature? *Où le fourrez-vous?*"

"I 'll look after it, I 'll keep it under. Rather, perhaps, I should say, I 'll bribe it and lull it — I 'll gorge it with earthly grandeurs."

"That 's better," said Miriam; "for a demon that 's kept under is a shabby little demon. Don't let us be shabby." Then she added, "Do you really go away the beginning of next week?"

"Monday night, if possible."

"That 's to Paris. Before you go to your new post they must give you an interval here."

"I sha'n't take it — I 'm so tremendously keen for my duties. I shall insist on going sooner. Oh, I shall be concentrated now."

"I 'll come and act there," said Miriam, with her handsome smile. "I 've already forgotten what it was I wanted to discuss with you: it was some trumpery stuff. What I want to say now is only one thing: that it 's not in the least true that because my life pitches me in every direction and mixes me up with all sorts of people — or rather with one sort, mainly, poor dears! — I have n't a decent character, I have n't common honesty. Your sympathy, your generosity, your patience, your precious suggestions, our dear, sweet days last summer in Paris, I shall never forget. You 're the best — you 're different from all the others. Think of me as you please, and make profane jokes about my matrimonial prospects — I shall think of *you* only in one way. I have a great respect for you. With all my heart I hope you 'll be a great diplomatist. God bless you!"

Miriam got up as she spoke, and in so doing she glanced at the clock — a movement which somehow only added to the noble gravity of her discourse: it was as if she were considering his time, not her own. Sherringham, at this, rising too, took out his watch and stood a moment with his eyes bent upon it, though without in the least perceiving what the needles marked.

"You 'll have to go, to reach the theatre at your usual hour, won't you? Let me not keep you. That is, let me keep you only long enough just to say this, once for all, as I shall never speak of it again. I 'm going away to save myself," Sherringham went on, deliber-

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ately, standing before her and soliciting her eyes with his own. "I ought to go, no doubt, in silence, in decorum, in virtuous submission to hard necessity — without asking for credit or sympathy, without provoking any sort of scene or calling attention to my fortitude. But I can't — upon my soul I can't. I can go, I can see it through, but I can't hold my tongue. I want you to know all about it, so that over there, when I 'm bored to death, I shall at least have the exasperatingly vain consolation of feeling that you do know."

He paused a moment, upon which Miriam asked, "That I do know what?"

"That I have a consuming passion for you, and that it 's impossible."

"Ah, impossible, my friend," she sighed, but with a quickness in her assent.

"Very good; it interferes, the gratification of it would interfere, fatally, with the ambition of each of us. Our ambitions are odious, but we are tied fast to them."

"Ah, why ain't we simple?" Miriam quavered. "Why ain't we of the people — *comme tout le monde* — just a man and a girl liking each other?"

Sherringham hesitated a moment; she was so tenderly mocking, so sweetly ambiguous, as she said this. "Because we are precious asses! However, I 'm simple enough, after all, to care for you as I have never cared for any human creature. You have, as it happens, a personal charm for me that no one has ever approached, and from the top of your splendid head to the sole of your theatrical shoe (I could go down on my face — there, abjectly — and kiss it!) every inch of you is dear and delightful to me. Therefore good-by."

Miriam stared, at this, with wider eyes; he had put the matter in a way that struck her. For a moment, all the same, he was afraid she would reply as if she had often heard that sort of thing before. But she was too much moved — the pure color that had risen to her face showed it — to have recourse to this particular facility. She was moved even to the glimmer of tears, though she gave him her hand with a smile. "I 'm so glad you 've said all that; for from you I know what it means. Certainly, it 's better for you to go away. Of course it 's all wrong, is n't it? — but that 's the only thing it can be: therefore it 's all right, is n't it? Some day when we are great people we 'll talk these things over; then we shall be quiet, we shall be at peace — let us hope so, at least — and better friends than people will know." She paused a moment, smiling still; then she said, while he held her hand, "Don't, *don't* come tomorrow night."

With this she attempted to draw her hand away, as if everything were settled and over; but the effect of her movement was that, as he held her hand tight, he was simply drawn toward her and close to her. The effect of this, in turn, was that, releasing her only to possess her more, he seized her in his arms, and breathing deeply, "I love you!" clasped her in a long embrace. It was so long that it gave the door of the room time to open before either of them had taken notice. Mrs. Rooth, who had not peeped in before, peeped in now, becoming in this matter witness of an incident she could scarcely have expected. The unexpected, indeed, for Mrs. Rooth, had never been an unpardonable element in things; it was her system, in general, to be too harmonious to be surprised. As the others turned round they saw her standing there and smiling at them, and heard her ejaculate, with wise indulgence —

"Oh, you extravagant children!"

Miriam brushed off her tears, quickly but unconfusedly. "He 's going away — he 's bidding us farewell."

Sherringham — it was perhaps a result of his general agitation — laughed

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out at the "us," and Mrs. Rooth returned, "Going away? Ah, then I must have one too!" And she held out both her hands. Sherringham stepped forward and, taking them, kissed her, respectfully, on each cheek, in the foreign manner, while she continued, "Our dear old friend — our kind, gallant gentleman!"

"The gallant gentleman has been promoted to a great post — the proper reward of his gallantry," Miriam said. "He 's going out as minister to some impossible place — where is it?"

"As minister — how very charming! We *are* getting on." And the old woman gave him a curious little upward interrogative leer.

"Oh, well enough. One must take what one can get," he answered.

"You 'll get everything now, I 'm sure, sha'n't you?" Mrs. Rooth asked, with an inflection that called back to him, comically (the source was so different), the very vibrations he had noted the day before in Lady Agnes's voice.

"He 's going to glory, and he 'll forget all about us — forget that he has ever known such people. So we shall never see him again, and it 's better so. Good-by, good-by," Miriam repeated; "the brougham must be there, but I won't take you. I want to talk to mother about you, and we shall say things not fit for you to hear. Oh, I 'll let you know what we lose — don't be afraid," she added to Mrs. Rooth. "He 's the rising star of diplomacy."

"I knew it from the first — I know how things turn out for such people as you!" cried the old woman, gazing fondly at Sherringham. "But you don't mean to say you are not coming to-morrow night?"

"Don't — don't; it 's great folly," Miriam interposed; "and it 's quite needless, since you saw me to-day."

Sherringham stood looking from the mother to the daughter, the former of whom broke out to the latter, "Oh, you dear rogue, to say one has *seen* you yet! You know how you 'll come up to it; you 'll be transcendent."

"Yes, I shall be there — certainly," said Sherringham, at the door, to Mrs. Rooth.

"Oh, you dreadful goose!" Miriam called after him. But he went out without looking round at her.

Henry James.

JOHN DICKINSON.

On the second of December, 1767, the Pennsylvania Chronicle and Universal Advertiser produced a sensation among the staid citizens of Philadelphia. To those acquainted with the reputation of its editor, William Goddard, there was less surprise, though greater interest. In New York, immediately before the meeting of the Stamp Act Congress, he had incensed the Royal Council and excited the people by scattering broadcast the Constitutional Courant, purporting to be printed "by Andrew Marvel, at the sign of the Bribe refused, on Constitutional Hill, North America." Coiled about the title of "that incendiary paper" was the representation of a snake in eight parts, denoting New England and the other sections of the American colonies, together with the motto "Join or die." But the existence of the Constitutional Courant, like its object (to promote union against the Stamp Act), had been transitory. It had had but a single issue; and its bold publisher, moving to Philadelphia, had started the Pennsyl-

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vania Chronicle and Universal Advertiser.

In the issue above referred to, this paper contained a letter, addressed To my Dear Countrymen, and signed A Farmer, the tone and aspect of which aroused much curiosity and excitement. Who this Farmer might be many were asking, but no one could tell. The chief evidence presented by the letter itself was in its opening, which appeared to be a description of the writer, and was as follows: "I am a farmer, settled, after a variety of fortunes, near the banks of the river Delaware, in the province of Pennsylvania. I received a liberal education, and have been engaged in the busy scenes of life, but am now convinced that a man may be as happy without bustle as with it. My farm is small; my servants are few and good; I have a little money at interest; I wish no more; my employment in my own affairs is easy; and with a contented, grateful mind, undisturbed by worldly hopes or fears relating to myself, I am completing the number of days allotted to me by divine goodness."

Before speculation as to the identity of this wise, contented old "farmer" could take definite shape, there appeared a second letter, with the same address and signature, upon the same general subject and with a similar treatment; and during the ensuing ten weeks ten more were published, the last on February 17, 1768. With the advent of each successive letter the popular interest and excitement increased and spread. It was dispatched and copied throughout the thirteen provinces. As soon as the series was completed, it was issued and disseminated as a pamphlet, entitled Letters from a Farmer of Pennsylvania to the Inhabitants of the British Colonies; and soon the name and words of John Dickinson — for the author was early discovered — were known and read from Massachusetts Bay through Georgia. Indeed, it may be said that prior to the Revolution no American composition was so widely read and admired. Its fame and circulation were not restricted to the British colonies. In May, 1768, it was reprinted in London, with a preface written by Benjamin Franklin, and in 1769 it was published in French at Paris.

This sudden and widespread popularity of the Letters from a Farmer was largely due to the efficiency of the means employed for their circulation. In the American colonies, the newspaper, though of recent origin and crude form, had already become an important circulating medium. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the public duty of news-vender was attached to the office of postmaster, and was performed through correspondence, by circular letters, with neighboring towns and provinces. In 1704, John Campbell, postmaster of Boston, tiring of this clumsy and laborious method, instituted a novel substitute. He started the Boston News-Letter, the first newspaper in America to survive its first issue. Printed on a single sheet, — more often on a half-sheet, — of foolscap size, with two columns on each side, it contained, first, extracts from recent London papers, and then an odd mixture of more important local events with striking incidents and rumors of other places and provinces. Though for fifteen years the Boston News-Letter existed without a rival in America, by 1766 it had been the model for at least forty-three newspapers. Most of them were issued once a week, and were filled chiefly with news and advertisements. But as rumors arose and increased of the designs of the mother country to tax America, the newspapers became more and more the vehicles of public opinion. It was thus that the Letters from a Farmer, as they successively appeared, were taken up and passed on by these public sentinels guarding the common welfare.

These Letters were welcomed by the people because they revealed the startling

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nature of the political situation. The storm of resistance that disturbed the whole seaboard upon the passage of the Stamp Act had been almost allayed by the repeal of that measure. Directly, the conviction had spread that Great Britain had yielded the point in dispute, the right to tax the colonies; and there had been a signal reaction in public sentiment toward gratitude, loyalty, and confidence. But this feeling was unfounded. The impossibility of enforcement, not a yielding of the principle, had brought about the repeal of the Stamp Act; and the new ministry, under the lead of Charles Townshend, imputing the failure to a defect in method and a lack of policy, had already begun a second and more subtle attempt to attain the primary object. Under the pretense of exercising its acknowledged right to regulate commerce, Parliament had in June, 1767, substituted for a direct tax — the feature so obnoxious in the Stamp Act — an indirect duty on imports; had imposed a tariff on all importations into the colonies of tea, paints, paper, glass, and lead, — the income therefrom to be used, so far as needed, in supporting the government, not of Great Britain, but of the colonies themselves. Surely, for finesse and boldness this new plan of attack was quite worthy of the brilliant and versatile Townshend; and it might have been successful had it not been for the Letters from a Farmer of Pennsylvania. They sounded the alarm throughout the colonies, and aroused the slumbering people to prompt and vigorous resistance.

Indeed, one can readily understand the remarkable influence of these Letters after noting their style. They abound in direct, incisive statement, cogent reasoning, keen sarcasm, and impassioned appeal; and withal they are infused with a moderate judicial spirit, and are enriched and strengthened by extensive legal and political learning. By a brief, pungent analysis of the recent Townshend Act, the writer revealed an object essentially the same with that of the Grenville Stamp Act, — to appropriate the money of the colonies without their consent. "It is a bird," he declared, "sent out over the waters to discover whether the waves that lately agitated this part of the world with such violence are yet subsided. If this adventurer gets footing here, we shall quickly find it to be of the kind described by the poet, — '*infelix vates*,' — a direful foreteller of future calamities." Reflecting upon the consequences of submission, he intimated: "Some future historian may thus record our fall: 'The eighth year of this reign was distinguished by a very memorable event, the American colonies then submitting for the first time to be taxed by the British Parliament. . . . From thence the decline of their freedom began, and its decay was extremely rapid; for as money was always raised upon them by the Parliament, their assemblies grew immediately useless, and in a short time contemptible; and in less than one hundred years the people sunk down into that tameness and supineness of spirit by which they still continue to be distinguished.'"

The fineness of this sarcasm is no less remarkable than are the dignity, fervor, and force of the final appeal in the twelfth and concluding letter of the series: "Let us with a truly wise generosity and charity banish and discourage all illiberal distinctions which may arise from differences in situation, forms of government, or modes of religion. Let us consider ourselves as men — freemen — Christian freemen, separated from the rest of the world, and firmly bound together by the same rights, interests, and dangers. . . . Let these truths be indelibly impressed on our minds: that we cannot be happy without being free; that we cannot be free without being secure in our property; that we cannot be secure in our property if, without our consent, others may, as by right, take it

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away; that taxes imposed on us by Parliament do thus take it away; that duties laid for the sole purpose of raising money are taxes; that attempts to lay such duties should be instantly and firmly opposed; that this opposition can never be effectual unless it be the united effort of these provinces; that therefore benevolence of temper towards each other and unanimity of counsels are essential to the welfare of the whole; and lastly, that, for this reason, every man amongst us who in any manner would encourage either dissension, diffidence, or indifference between these colonies is an enemy to himself and to his country."

Here is, indeed, a masterly summary of the political situation and of the needs of the time, and as such it was everywhere welcomed by the patriots. John Dickinson, the Farmer of Pennsylvania, became the hero of the hour. Within a month after the last letter was published, the citizens of Boston, in town-meeting, voted "that the thanks of the town be given to the ingenious author of a course of letters published at Philadelphia and in this place, and signed A Farmer;" and at the same time the meeting appointed Benjamin Church, John Hancock, Samuel Adams, Joseph Warren, and John Rowe a committee to prepare and publish a letter of thanks. When prepared, it was accepted by the town and published in the several newspapers. After an elaborate panegyric, it begged leave to "salute the Farmer as the friend of Americans and the common benefactor of mankind." The Society of Fort Saint David's — a company of young men in Pennsylvania, mainly of Welsh descent, associated for the purpose of fishing in the Schuylkill, and possessed of much local prestige — presented Dickinson with an address in a box of heart of oak, ornamented with gold letters, emblems, mottoes, and inscriptions. These are but examples of the many marks of public favor bestowed on Dickinson by his grateful countrymen. It is probable that at this time no man, Franklin possibly excepted, was more widely or more favorably known in the American colonies.

As a natural result, Dickinson was immediately called into politics, both local and intercolonial, a work for which he had varied and peculiar qualifications. Not the least of these were his parentage and his social connections. He was born in 1732. His parents then resided at their country-seat, Crosia, in Talbot County, Maryland; but, a few years later, they removed to Dover, Delaware. At Dover, his father, Samuel Dickinson, a rich Quaker, purchased a large tract of land, and held several important public offices. His mother, Mary Cadwalader, came from a good family of Welsh descent, and was the sister of Dr. John Cadwalader, distinguished in Philadelphia prior to the Revolution as a physician, philanthropist, and man of affairs. After a careful training at home, Dickinson was sent abroad, according to a custom prevalent among wealthy families, especially of the Middle and Southern colonies. Before going abroad he had studied law with John Moland, a barrister of the Inner Temple and a prominent lawyer in Philadelphia, and while in England he continued his legal studies at the Temple, London. On his return to America he began the practice of law, and soon achieved marked success.

In 1770, shortly after the publication of his Letters from a Farmer, Dickinson, then thirty-eight years of age, was married to Mary Norris, the sole surviving child of Isaac Norris, Jr., and of Sara Logan. By this alliance he added to his own large property the control of the Norris estate, and became connected with two of the first Quaker families in Pennsylvania. Both the Logan and the Norris families had long been prominent in politics and in society. James Logan, the maternal grandfather of Mary Norris, came to America with William Penn,

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and held successively the important offices of secretary of the Council, trustee of the Penn estate, and chief justice of the province. Withal he gained some distinction in science and literature, and he established a free public library in Philadelphia. Isaac Norris, Jr., like his father, was early in life a successful merchant, greatly increasing his paternal fortune. They both became distinguished in public life. A few years before his death, Isaac Norris, Sr., built and adorned the beautiful country-seat of Fair Hill, situated just outside the town of Philadelphia, upon an estate of over five hundred acres. This was the favorite residence of Isaac Norris, Jr., also, till his death, in 1766; and here John Dickinson lived after his marriage to Mary Norris, then its sole mistress.

Prior to the Revolution Fair Hill was reputed to be one of the most beautiful country residences in America. The mansion itself was a large square structure, with dormer windows and a recessed porch. The spacious halls and parlors were wainscoted in oak and red cedar polished with wax. A flight of broad steps descended from the porch to a wide carriage-way that, bordered with lofty trees and dense shrubbery, led over the lawn to the Germantown road. Several acres were laid out in walks, fishponds, and gardens. The last, intersected by graveled paths with clipped hedges, contained many costly exotics, besides a variety of native plants.

But of far more interest to Dickinson was the library which he found at Fair Hill. It included many rare and valuable books, collected mainly by his wife's father, a man of taste, education, and scholarly attainment. It is said to have been, next to that of James Logan, the most extensive in the province. With this added to a large library of his own, Dickinson undoubtedly possessed an equipment for study and research excelled by few, if any, contemporary Americans. Even before going to Fair Hill he wrote of himself: "Being generally master of my time, I spend a good deal of it in a library which I think the most valuable part of my small estate; and being acquainted with two or three gentlemen of abilities and learning, who honor me with their friendship, I have acquired, I believe, a greater knowledge in history and the laws and constitution of my country than is generally attained by men of my class, many of them not being so fortunate as I have been in the opportunities of getting information."

His knowledge of history and government was at this time supplemented by eight years of political experience. In 1762, at thirty years of age, he had entered the Assembly, and since then had been most of the time connected with that body. This period was a stormy one in local politics. The standard of equity recognized by the first Proprietor, William Penn, had not been maintained by his successors. In 1763, John Penn, the lieutenant-governor of the province and the representative of the Proprietaries, by insisting upon a considerable diminution of taxes on Proprietary lands, stirred up a large and vigorous opposition in the Assembly, led by Benjamin Franklin and Joseph Galloway. The latter were so incensed that they endeavored, by petition to the king, to transform the Proprietary government into a royal province. But a large minority, chiefly Quakers, in the Assembly would not go to this extreme, and of this party John Dickinson, who had recently taken his seat, became the leader. He did not countenance the unjust and arbitrary exactions of the Proprietors, but their rule, as a whole, he much preferred to that of royal favorites or emissaries. He therefore resisted to the utmost the revolutionary designs of Franklin and Galloway. But for the time he was defeated. The petition to the king for a change of government was voted by the Assembly, and Frank-

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lin was sent to England to advocate it at court.

Franklin gone, Dickinson easily became the first statesman in Pennsylvania, — a fact evident from his part in the stirring events following the passage of the Stamp Act. Under the imminence of foreign oppression local dissension was put aside, and, led by Dickinson, the Assembly adopted and executed a policy of firm but temperate resistance; and this moderation was in such contrast with the violence of Massachusetts and other colonies that it was publicly recognized in a letter from General Conway, Secretary of State. As a delegate from Pennsylvania, Dickinson attended the Stamp Act Congress, and drew its most important measure, the Resolves, called the American Bill of Rights; and on his return he published an able pamphlet, discussing the situation and outlining the policy of non-importation presently executed. To his culture, wealth, social position, and political experience the popularity of the Letters from a Farmer now added an inter-colonial reputation, and their author was hailed throughout America as a leader of the first importance.

This expectation was not disappointed. The Farmer of Pennsylvania had not only revealed the true import of the Townshend Act, but had also suggested a plan for obtaining its repeal. This was, in brief, to withhold American trade with Great Britain. It was not a new plan. Two years before, it was executed against the Stamp Act, and with success. Hence it was now adopted with the greater alacrity, and along the whole seaboard merchants, spurred by public sentiment, entered into agreements not to import the goods recently made dutiable.

At first this policy was successful. It brought such enormous losses upon English merchants that they induced Parliament to repeal the Townshend Act. But from this concession there was one reservation which maintained the principle: the duty on tea was retained. Accordingly, colonial merchants, modifying their agreements, refused to import tea. But they did not persist in unanimity and zeal. Greed warred with patriotism. The merchants of Rhode Island and New York withdrew from the agreement, and the friends of the movement apprehended ultimate failure.

To avert this catastrophe, Dickinson and his associates devised an ingenious and comprehensive extension of the plan. They proposed that its execution be entrusted no longer to the faithless merchants, but henceforth to the more patriotic farmers, the consumers themselves. Should the latter form associations pledged not to consume the article taxed, then, it was believed, the merchants, deprived of a market, would, at least for their own interest, refrain from importations.

Had the greed of colonial merchants been the only obstacle, it might have been overcome by this new scheme, so intense at this time was the spirit of patriotism in the masses. But the policy of peaceful resistance met another and more serious difficulty, — the violence of the people. Foreseeing this, the Farmer of Pennsylvania had given earnest warning. "The cause of liberty," he had written, "is a cause of too much dignity to be sullied by turbulence and tumult." He had urged his countrymen "immediately, vigorously, and unanimously to exert themselves, in the most firm but most peaceful manner, for obtaining relief;" and in Pennsylvania, where he held the reins of power, this policy had been fully and uniformly executed. But in other colonies, guided by men of a different temperament, not the same consistency and moderation had been manifested. In Massachusetts, particularly, the spirit of resistance had been, from the first, rather active than passive. The fierce denunciations and passionate appeals of James Otis, the "impetuous

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ardor and restless activity" of Samuel Adams, had begotten in the people a temper toward the British authorities which it was hard to control. Several times, when suddenly and intensely excited, it had given way even to riot and pillage.

Of course in England these acts of violence had greatly injured the cause of the Americans. In fact, they had distracted attention from its real merit. The considerable sympathy for colonial grievances had been quickly overborne. Determined first of all to enforce the law and to secure order, the British public had sanctioned the quartering of troops in the colonies, and at last, thoroughly exasperated by the destruction of the tea in Boston harbor, had approved the passage of the Boston Port Bill. Thus mainly by her own impetuosity and violence, Massachusetts, impatient of the accepted policy of peaceful commercial retaliation, had brought herself to the dread alternative of abject submission or of severe punishment. She would not submit; and she could endure to be punished, provided she were sustained by her sister colonies. Accordingly, to secure this support, she speedily dispatched circulars to the public bodies, and private letters to the leading men, in the several colonies, soliciting coöperation in council and in action at this crisis of her affairs.

Assistance was sought in particular from Pennsylvania; for in 1774 this was the most populous province, and Philadelphia the largest city, on the continent. Situated as she was midway among the thirteen colonies, Pennsylvania possessed great importance in the execution of an intercolonial policy or movement. Furthermore, by her conduct thus far in the pending controversy, she had gained the confidence of the neighboring colonies and the respect of the mother country. As Joseph Reed wrote at this time to the Earl of Dartmouth, secretary of state for the colonies, "This city has been distinguished for its peaceable and regular demeanor; nor has it departed from it on the present occasion, as there have been no mobs, no insults to individuals, no injury to private property."

While, therefore, the support of Pennsylvania was indispensable, the Boston patriots sought it in uncertainty; for they had reason to think that their recent course was not generally approved. A large and influential part of the population were Quakers, a sect opposed to violent or extreme action of any kind, and especially averse to active opposition to the mother country. Without their participation the coöperation of the province could hardly be secured. There was also the Proprietary party, devoted to the support of the existing government, and hence looking askance at anything savoring of revolution. Yet both this and the Quaker element were disposed, after a fashion, to resist the aggression of Great Britain, and if properly approached could be brought to the assistance of Boston. To effect this result, however, the ardent Whigs were quite incompetent. They knew that this lay in the power of but one man, — John Dickinson. No man surpassed him in influence among the Quakers. He was attached to them by birth and education and connected with them by marriage, and his well-known caution and moderation attracted and retained their confidence. At the same time he was the recognized leader of the Proprietary party. Thus generally trusted and obeyed, of high professional standing and of great wealth, he more than any other had for several years guided the course of Pennsylvania, and thereby moulded the prevailing policy of the colonies. It was plain, therefore, that to secure their end the Whigs must have the aid of Dickinson; but whether they could win him over was quite uncertain.

Evidently, Dickinson was chagrined at the recent turn of events in Boston.

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In a letter to Josiah Quincy, about this time, he wrote: "Nothing can throw us in a pernicious confusion but one colony's breaking the line of opposition, by advancing too hastily before the rest. The one which dares to betray the common cause, by rushing forward contrary to the maxims of discipline established by common sense and the experience of ages, will inevitably and utterly perish." Massachusetts, rushing forward, had dared "to betray the common cause," and was now facing the consequences. Would Dickinson, nevertheless, interpose to save her?

The circumstances required immediate action. Urged by letters from Hancock and Adams, the leading Whigs, Joseph Reed, Thomas Mifflin, and Charles Thomson, issued a call for a meeting of the principal citizens in the long room of the City Tavern, hoping to elicit an expression of sentiment favorable to Boston. But they knew that if Dickinson should quietly ignore the meeting or should publicly antagonize their purpose they could not succeed. Immediately, therefore, with much anxiety, they waited upon him at his country-seat, Fair Hill.

This conference occupied most of the day, and must have covered the whole political outlook; for the course now taken by Philadelphia would be the one followed by the whole province, and probably by all the Middle and Southern colonies. The Whigs gained over Dickinson to their cause; and, such was the crisis, they entrusted that cause to his superior judgment and leadership. Toward evening they took their departure from Fair Hill, assured of success; for they had come to a complete understanding and acquired a competent leader, as ensuing events made plain.

At the City Tavern they found the long room crowded with representatives of all classes, — officers of the government, adherents of the Proprietaries, Quakers, Moderates and Whigs, awaiting with much excitement and some hostility the opening of the meeting. After the reading of the Boston letter, Reed, Mifflin, and Thomson spoke in turn, all warmly urging immediate and outspoken approval of Boston; but their proposition was received in uproar and confusion. As soon as order could be restored, Dickinson, probably as prearranged, in a conciliatory tone, recommended that a more guarded reply be made to the Boston circular, and the governor be petitioned, in view of the crisis, to call the Assembly, — his design being to make the governor's refusal, which he anticipated, an excuse for calling a conference of the people independent of the hostile Assembly. The ruse was successful throughout. His recommendations, appearing non-committal and inoffensive, were at once adopted by the meeting, and he was made chairman of a committee for their execution. The governor rejected the petition as an insult to the authorities, and directly a provincial convention was assembled by the Whigs, with the concurrence of Dickinson. The latter now took the chief control of the Whig movement, and his mastery as a politician became evident. This popular convention in its important acts did little more than to register his will. Its statement of grievances and its instructions to the members of Assembly, both written by him, evinced, in decided but respectful language, a determination to resist taxation by Parliament on the one hand, and on the other an aversion to a separation from the mother country. He was made chairman of the committee delegated to correspond with the other colonies; and, later, he was appointed a representative of Pennsylvania in the First Continental Congress.

In this first general assemblage of American statesmen no one exerted more influence or did better service than Dickinson. In fact, no one brought greater prestige or fitter talents. Few of them

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had any reputation outside their respective colonies. But he, known and admired by all as the author of the Letters *from a Farmer, was at once singled out* with eager curiosity and regarded with much deference. This predilection was confirmed upon a personal acquaintance. His personality was singularly impressive and attractive. John Adams thus writes of Dickinson's appearance at this time: "Just recovered from an illness, he is a shadow, tall but slender as a reed, pale as ashes." A more satisfactory description is that given by William T. Read in his Life of George Read, and is the picture of Dickinson in his later years cast clear and full upon the sensitive mind of a youth: "I have a vivid impression of the man, — tall and spare, his hair white as snow, his garb uniting with the severe simplicity of his sect a neatness and elegance peculiarly in keeping with it; and his manners beautiful emanations of the great Christian principle of love, with the gentleness and affectionateness . . . combining the politeness of a man of the world familiar with society in its most polished forms, *with conventional canons of behavior.* Truly he lives in my memory as a realization of my beau-ideal of a gentleman." In speech he was easy, fluent, and earnest, though temperate, exhibiting rare tact and self-control. His whole conduct was stamped with culture and courtesy. At the same time, the graces of his person were set off by a fitting background of hospitality. The sober Quaker city had never received so large and distinguished a company of guests; and she quite exhausted herself, and them, in their entertainment; but it is safe to say that few entertained with more gracious or more generous hospitality than did the master of Fair Hill.

But what most gave Dickinson influence in the First Continental Congress was his acknowledged and unrivaled success as a politician of the highest class. Though in the guise of a Farmer of Pennsylvania he had exposed and refuted the shrewdest English leaders, still he had given a more recent and equally *great evidence of his power.* By his patriotism and adroitness he had attached to the common cause the great pivotal province of Pennsylvania, — long the arena of contending factions, and often the source of chilling indifference, — and thereby had greatly influenced in the same direction the other Middle and the Southern colonies. In short, probably he had done more than any other man toward the present realization of the dream of an intercolonial union.

Moreover, Dickinson's moderate, conciliatory spirit, by which chiefly he had accomplished these results, was generally commended by his fellow-delegates. Many of them were wealthy, conservative land-owners; nearly all were still warmly attached to the mother country; and the great majority, though determined to relieve the Boston patriots in their distress, were, nevertheless, disposed to restrain them from further excesses, and to make an earnest effort at accommodation with England. To *effect this object had now become a delicate* matter, demanding just the method and the policy that had been so successful in Pennsylvania. Hence it was substantially the plan urged by the delegates from that province which the Congress finally adopted.

"It is at present," Joseph Reed had written to the Earl of Dartmouth in July, 1774, "the sense of the inhabitants of Pennsylvania that no measure of opposition to the mother country should be adopted until other modes have failed of success." Two months having passed, this now became the sentiment of the First Continental Congress. Accordingly, that body, while resolving to support and relieve the inhabitants of Boston, at the same time strictly enjoined them to be patient. It mainly devoted itself to "redressing American grievances, ascertaining American rights, and re-

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storing harmony between Great Britain and her colonies;" and to this end it prepared and issued a series of papers that reflect alike the eminence of its statesmanship and the justice of its cause. Indeed, no further praise is needed for this work than that bestowed in the ensuing January by the Earl of Chatham in the House of Lords: "When your lordships look at the papers transmitted us from America; when you consider their decency, firmness, and wisdom, you cannot but respect their cause, and wish to make it your own. For myself, I must declare and avow that in all my reading and observation — and it has been my favorite study — I have read Thucydides, and have studied and admired the master-states of the world — that for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, under such a complication of difficult circumstances, no nation or body of men can stand in preference to the General Congress at Philadelphia."

The paper which may well have been most prominent in the mind of the Earl of Chatham when he spoke these remarkable words was the First Petition to the King. This was intended to present to King and Parliament the plea of the colonies for justice and reconciliation. Its rejection would certainly inaugurate retaliation, and might lead to war; while its favorable reception would be at least an augury of a better understanding. Its terms and spirit, therefore, engaged the earnest solicitude of the Congress. The drafting of this instrument was first assigned to Patrick Henry, whose wonderful eloquence had made him conspicuous; but his work, when completed, was not acceptable. Meanwhile, Dickinson had been admitted as a delegate, and at once added to the committee on the petition. To him the task was given anew, and his draft met the approval of his associates. He also wrote the important Address to the Inhabitants of Canada, an eloquent appeal for sympathy and cooperation against a common oppression. In some respects these have few equals among American state papers. They merit the earnest study alike of students of our history and of leaders in our politics. They contributed in a great degree to that eminent reputation for statesmanship enjoyed by the leading patriots of the Revolutionary era.

The merit of these papers is seen equally in the salutary effect which they had in the colonies. They calmed excitement, spread confidence, and encouraged moderation. In a firm but reasonable spirit America awaited the answer to her prayers. Had a similar spirit controlled Great Britain, the magnanimous efforts of Dickinson and his fellow-conservatives might have brought about reconciliation.

But neither the pleas of the colonies nor the warnings of Burke and Chatham could turn the British ministry and the parliamentary majority from their fatal purpose of requiring unconditional submission. The petition to the king was rejected, and a rebellion was declared to exist in Massachusetts. As prearranged, the colonies retaliated by a total suspension of commercial intercourse with Great Britain, and the Second Continental Congress assembled to deliberate upon the changing outlook. In this body, Dickinson, again a delegate from Pennsylvania, found a temper far different from that of its predecessor. Stirred to exasperation by the recent affairs at Lexington and Concord, the delegates began to lose hope, and even desire, of reconciliation with England. This feeling was zealously promoted by the New England delegates, led by John Adams. In the preceding Congress these men had with difficulty repressed their vehemence and radicalism. They had borne with ill-disguised impatience what Josiah Quincy called "the refinements, delays, and experiments of the Philadelphians." Now they came out frankly and stoutly. They were rapidly

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gaining sympathy and following. They were known already to be meditating independence; and if not checked, they might soon effect its declaration.

This idea of a total separation from the mother country was intolerable to Dickinson. It antagonized his temperament and his convictions. It could be realized, if at all, only through a fratricidal war, awful in its consequences; and from this he shrunk with a revulsion due partly to his Quaker training, partly to his delicate, sensitive organization. At the same time, he believed such a separation to be impolitic. Seven years before, in his Letters from a Farmer, he had written: "If I am an enthusiast in anything, it is in my zeal for the perpetual dependence of these colonies on their mother country." "The prosperity of these colonies is founded in their dependence on Great Britain." "I regard Great Britain as a bulwark happily fixed between these colonies and the powerful nations of Europe."

To these convictions he still adhered, and with them his present policy was thoroughly consistent. From the beginning he had urged that oppressive measures of Parliament should be resisted at first peacefully, by suspension of commercial intercourse. Should this policy of peace fail, he had suggested an obvious alternative: "If at length it becomes undoubted that an inveterate resolution is formed to annihilate the liberties of the governed, the English history affords frequent examples of resistance by force." Accordingly, on hearing of the inroad to Lexington and Concord, Dickinson, in spite of his religious scruples, became colonel of the first Pennsylvania battalion of militia raised for defense; and for the same purpose — the resistance of invasion — he approved the assumption by the Second Continental Congress of full control of the Continental army before Boston. At the same time, he expected and desired that ultimately the total failure of coercion would bring about a reconciliation upon a constitutional basis.

Hence, conscious of the purity of his motives and convinced of the wisdom of his policy, Dickinson set himself squarely against the rapid drift toward independence. In the first place, he advocated the policy and expediency of a second and final petition to the king, couched in respectful though firm language. Thereupon it first became evident that two extremes of opinion had been forming in the Congress. The radicals, led by John Adams, opposed the petition as useless, calling it "that measure of imbecility;" while under the name of the Olive Branch it was supported by Jay and other conservative minds. Being finally voted by the Congress, it was drafted by Dickinson, signed by all the delegates, and sent to England. But it was in vain: the ministry had gone too far to recognize any olive branch other than a tender of complete submission.

Meanwhile, Dickinson, at the request of his associates, drew the declaration of "the causes and necessity of their taking up arms," — a paper rarely equaled for lofty sentiment and chaste diction. "We are reduced to the alternative," it declares, "of choosing an unconditional submission to the tyranny of irritated ministers or resistance by force. The latter is our choice. We have counted the cost of this contest, and find nothing so dreadful as voluntary slavery. . . . We have not raised armies with ambitious designs of separating from Great Britain and establishing independent States. We fight not for glory or for conquest. . . . In our native land, in defense of the freedom that is our birthright, and which we ever enjoyed till the late violation of it; for the protection of our property, acquired solely by the honest industry of our forefathers and ourselves, against violence actually offered, we have taken up arms. . . . With an humble confidence in the mercies of the

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supreme and impartial Judge and Ruler of the universe, we most devoutly implore his divine goodness to protect us happily through this great conflict, to dispose our adversaries to reconciliation on reasonable terms, and thereby to relieve the empire from the calamities of a civil war."

In July, 1775, this declaration of Congress was proclaimed at the head of the several divisions of the Continental army; and it is recorded that "as soon as these memorable words were pronounced to General Putnam's division, which he had ordered to be paraded on Prospect Hill, they shouted in three huzzas a loud Amen." Thus, still the acknowledged and unrivaled spokesman of the thirteen colonies, John Dickinson strove with all his tact, force, and eloquence to mould the sentiment and to guide the action of the people away from independence toward the attainment of an American Magna Charta.

But it was inevitable that this resort to arms should embitter the combatants, — should cause them to disregard or impel them to destroy the bonds of fraternity. Under oppression, in the midst of war, the colonists would not reason, — they could only feel; and an irresistible impulse, arising in Massachusetts, swept down the Atlantic seaboard through Georgia, — an impatient determination, without regard to the consequences, to throw off all connection with the unnatural mother country. Against this gathering mighty voice of the people, of what avail was the calm, temperate, earnest protest of John Dickinson! He soon felt his weakness, but he could not change his mind.

John Adams was not slow to read the times and to seize his opportunity. He was instant, in and out of season declaring that all was ripe for independence. For a time its declaration was staved off by the conservatives, on the ground that sentiment in its favor was not yet unanimous. This was the case particularly in Pennsylvania, truly called the battle-field of independence. Only by the exercise of great tact and patience had Dickinson drawn this province into the general resistance to British aggression; and of course the New England scheme of independence was even less acceptable to the Quakers and Proprietaries. These two parties, ill-mated though they were, now led by Dickinson in the opposite direction, controlled the Assembly, and ignored the growing popular approval of separation. In November, 1775, they instructed the Pennsylvania delegates in Congress to "dissent from and utterly reject any propositions, should such be made, that may cause or lead to a separation from our mother country, or a change in the form of this government." Hence resistance to independence was associated with the maintenance of the Proprietary government. Indeed, the former depended on the latter, — a fact soon perceived by the more zealous advocates of separation. Hence, led by Benjamin Franklin and encouraged by John Adams and his New England associates, they strove, by overthrowing the government, to commit the province to a declaration of independence. Thus, with Franklin's return to America, after a lapse of more than ten years, his old struggle against Dickinson for the destruction of the Proprietary government was renewed. This time it had better chances for success.

In this struggle John Adams was not content with giving advice. He induced Congress, on May 15, 1776, to declare that all authority under the Crown should be suppressed, and all powers of government should be drawn from the people. Under this powerful impulse, the popular party in Pennsylvania immediately assembled a provincial conference directly from the people, which authorized the delegates in Congress to vote for independence, and organized itself into a convention for framing a new state government. With this final blow

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the Proprietary government ceased to exist.

Though beaten thus upon his own field, Dickinson still adhered to his convictions in Congress. In the great final debate over the Declaration of Independence, he was its most formidable opponent, and John Adams and Richard Henry Lee its ablest advocates. The last two, in orations of great fervor and force, appealed especially to the passions and the imaginations of their associates; reciting the injuries America had received, together with her failures to obtain redress, and painting the glory and the felicity that would attend the birth and the progress of the new republic. But Dickinson deprecated all excitement and precipitation. He calmly but earnestly appealed to reason. His argument was: To substitute the attainment of independence for the resistance of aggression as the object of the war would, on the one hand, destroy the union of the people, since all could see the necessity of opposing the pretensions of ministers, but not all that of fighting for independence; and, on the other hand, as aiming at the dismemberment of the empire rather than at the revocation of obnoxious laws, it would unite the British nation in support of their ministers and in the suppression of rebellion. At any rate, only a long succession of victories by the Americans — which was improbable in such an inequality of power — could induce Great Britain to recognize American independence. "Prudence," he declared, "requires that we should not abandon certain for uncertain objects. Two hundred years of happiness and present prosperity, resulting from English laws and the union with Great Britain, demonstrates that America can be wisely governed by the King and Parliament. It is not as independent but as subject states, not as a republic but as a monarchy, that the colonies have attained to power and greatness. What, then, is the object of these chimeras, hatched in the days of discord and war? Shall the transports of fury sway us more than the experience of ages, and induce us to destroy, in a moment of anger, the work which has been cemented and tried by time? The restraining power of the King and Parliament is indispensable to protect the colonies from discord and civil war."

Dickinson was outvoted. Was he outargued? Whether he was or was not, the great majority of the Continental Congress, together with an overwhelming majority of the American people, were at length resolved to be free and independent, and so they declared. But, in justice to Dickinson's understanding, it should be borne in mind that independence was ultimately achieved largely because difficulties predicted by him, and realized in fact, were offset by occurrences which no one foresaw, — notably the meagreness of the British forces and the incompetency of British generals; and the casting off of "the restraining power of the King and Parliament" was followed by a disgraceful and disastrous period of state selfishness and jealousy. It actually brought "discord," if it did not eventually lead even to "civil war."

In regard to his integrity throughout this memorable contest, that should no longer be questioned. At the last he stood almost alone; yet he never faltered. Nothing could have sustained him but the honesty of his purpose and the strength of his convictions. For a time his course cost him his seat in Congress and his influence in public life. Nevertheless, he was conscious of his own rectitude. "If the present day," he said, "is too warm for me to be calmly judged, I can credit my country for justice some years hence."

The reaction of public sentiment in his favor began sooner than was to be expected, considering the extremity to which he had gone and the criticism he had encountered. His sincerity and patriotism soon became evident from his

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abiding by the decision of Congress and his serving for a time in the Continental army. In 1780 he was chosen president of Delaware, whither he had retired from public life. Two years later, resuming his residence in Philadelphia, he was elected to the supreme executive council, and almost immediately made president, of Pennsylvania. In the Constitutional Convention of 1787, a representative of Delaware, he, together with Oliver Ellsworth, led the smaller States in their great struggle to secure in the new national government a recognition of the principle of equality among the States. In fact, it was mainly through their efforts that this became the fundamental principle in constituting the Senate of the United States; and when the new government was submitted to the people, Dickinson advocated its ratification in his Letters of Fabius, his last political pamphlet.

Thus he lived to assist in the embodiment and establishment of that American independence which he had discouraged and opposed in its inception and declaration. In both cases he was actuated by the same noble principles, — fidelity to his convictions and devotion to his country. He declared himself to be "a trustee for my countrymen to deliberate upon questions important to their happiness;" and eminently faithful was he to that trust through an unusually long and varied public service. Prior to the Revolution his aim was to secure for Americans the constitutional rights enjoyed by Englishmen. And to this end he uniformly approved those measures only that were warranted by English precedents. The danger was that those precedents would be disregarded, in the excitement and the license of the times. Much praise, then, is due to him who, in spite of the public clamor and at the sacrifice of his popularity, stood firmly and consistently for law and moderation. His great work was first to stimulate, then to moderate, the incipient spirit of nationality till it should reach a consciousness of its destiny. That he believed this destiny to be the attainment of an American Magna Charta rather than of a national independence does not lessen the value of his service. It should not cloud the lustre of his fame. Few contemporary patriots understood so well the issue between Great Britain and her colonies. Surely no one could state it better. His statement was acceptable to the people because it was temperate, forcible, and comprehensive. He must be recognized not only as the chief political writer, but also as the great conservative of the Revolutionary era.

Frank Gaylord Cook.

THE QUEST OF MR. TEABY.

THE trees were bare on meadow and hill, and all about the country one saw the warm brown of lately fallen leaves that lingers awhile before the cold gray of winter. There was still a cheerful bravery of green in sheltered places, — a fine, live green that flattered the eye with its look of permanence; the first three quarters of the year seemed to have worked out their slow processes to make such perfect late-autumn days. In such weather I found even the East Wilby railroad station attractive, and waiting three hours for a slow train became a pleasure; the delight of idleness and even booklessness cannot be properly described.

The interior of the station was bleak and gravelly, but it would have been possible to find fault with any interior

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on such an out-of-doors day; and after the station-master had locked his ticket-office door and tried the handle twice, with a comprehensive look at me, he went slowly away up the road to spend some leisure time with his family. He had ceased to take any interest in the traveling public, and answered my questions as briefly as possible. After he had gone some distance he turned to look back, but finding that I still sat on the baggage truck in the sunshine, just where he left me, he seemed to smother his natural apprehensions, and went on.

One can spend a good half hour in watching crows as they go southward resolutely through the clear sky, and then waver and come straggling back as if they had forgotten something; one can think over all one's immediate affairs, and learn to know the outward aspect of such a place as East Wilby as if born and brought up there. But after a while I lost interest in my past and future; there was too much landscape before me at the moment, and a lack of figures. The weather was not to be enjoyed merely as an end, yet I felt no temptation to explore the up-hill road on the left or the level fields on the right; I sat still on my baggage truck and waited for something to happen. Sometimes one is so happy that there is nothing left to wish for but to be happier, and just as the remembrance of this truth illuminated my mind I saw two persons approaching from opposite directions. The first to arrive was a pleasant-looking elderly country woman, well wrapped in a worn winter cloak with a thick plaid shawl over it, and a white worsted cloud tied over her bonnet. She carried a well-preserved bandbox, — the outlines were perfect under its checked gingham cover, — and had a large bundle beside, securely rolled in a newspaper. From her dress I felt sure that she had made a mistake in dates, and expected winter to set in at once. Her face was crimson with undue warmth and what appeared in the end to have been unnecessary haste. She did not take any notice of the elderly man who reached the platform a minute later, until they were near enough to take each other by the hand and exchange most cordial greetings.

"Well, this is a treat!" said the man, who was a small and shivery-looking person. He carried a great umbrella and a thin, enameled-cloth valise, and wore an ancient little silk hat and a nearly new greenish linen duster, as if it were yet summer. "I was full o' thinkin' o' you day before yisterday; strange, wa'n't it?" he announced impressively, in a plaintive voice. "I was sayin' to myself, if there was one livin' bein' I coveted to encounter over East Wilby way, 't was you, Sister Pinkham."

"Warm to-day, ain't it?" responded Sister Pinkham. "How 's your health, Mr. Teaby? I guess I 'd better set right down here on the aidge of the platform; sha'n't we git more air than if we went inside the depot? It 's necessary to git my breath before I rise the hill."

"You can't seem to account for them foresights," continued Mr. Teaby, putting down his tall, thin valise and letting the empty top of it fold over. Then he stood his umbrella against the end of my baggage truck, without a look at me. I was glad that they were not finding me in their way. "Well, if this ain't very sing'lar, I never saw nothin' that was," repeated the little man. "Nobody can set forth to explain why the thought of you should have been so borne in upon me day before yisterday, your livin' countenance an' all, an' here we be to-day settin' side o' one another. I 've come to rely on them foresights; they 've been of consider'ble use in my business, too."

"Trade good as common this fall?" inquired Sister Pinkham languidly. "You don't carry such a thing as a good palm-leaf fan amon'st your stuff, I expect? It doos appear to me as if I had n't been more het up any day this year."

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"I should ha' had the observation to offer it before," said Mr. Teaby, with pride. "Yes, Sister Pinkham, I 've got an excellent fan right here, an' you shall have it."

He reached for his bag; I heard a clink, as if there were bottles within. Presently his companion began to fan herself with that steady sway and lop of the palm-leaf which one sees only in country churches in midsummer weather. Mr. Teaby edged away a little, as if he feared such a steady trade-wind.

"We might ha' picked out a shadier spot, on your account," he suggested. "Can't you unpin your shawl?"

"Not while I 'm so het," answered Sister Pinkham coldly. "Is there anythin' new recommended for rheumatic complaints?"

"They 're gittin' up new compounds right straight along, and send sights o' printed bills urgin' of me to buy 'em. I don't beseech none o' my customers to take them strange nostrums that I ain't able to recommend."

"Some is new cotches made o' the good old stand-bys, I expect," said Sister Pinkham, and there was a comfortable silence of some minutes.

"I 'm kind of surprised to meet with you to-day, when all 's said an' done; it kind of started me when I see 't was you, after dwellin' on you so day before yisterday," insisted Mr. Teaby; and this time Sister Pinkham took heed of the interesting coincidence.

"Thinkin' o' me, was you?" and she stopped the fan a moment, and turned to look at him with interest.

"I was so. Well, I never see nobody that kep' her looks as you do, and be'n a sufferer too, as one may express it."

Sister Pinkham sighed heavily, and began to ply the fan again. "You was sayin' just now that you found them foresighted notions work into your business."

"Yes 'm; I saved a valu'ble life this last spring. I was puttin' up my vials to start out over Briggsville way, an' 't was impressed upon me that I 'd better carry a portion o' opodildack. I was loaded up heavy, had all I could lug of spring goods, salts an' seny, and them big-bottle spring bitters o' mine that folks counts on regular. I could n't git the opodildack out o' my mind noway, and I did n't want it for nothin' nor nobody, but I had to remove a needed vial o' some kind of essence to give it place. When I was goin' down the lane t'wards Abel Dean's house, his women folks come flyin' out. 'Child 's a-dyin' in here,' says they; 'tumbled down the sullar stairs.' They was like crazy creatur's, an' I give 'em the vial right there in the lane, an' they run in an' I followed 'em. Last time I was there the child was a-playin' out; looked rugged and hearty. They 've never forgot it an' never will," said Mr. Teaby impressively, with a pensive look toward the horizon. "Want me to stop over night with 'em any time, or come an' take the hoss, or anythin'. Mis' Dean, she buys four times the essences an' stuff she wants; kind o' gratified, you see, an' did n't want to lose the child, I expect, though she 's got a number o' others. If it had n't be'n for its bein' so impressed on my mind, I should have omitted that opodildack. I deem it a winter remedy, chiefly."

"Perhaps the young one would ha' come to without none; they do survive right through everythin', an' then again they seem to be taken away right in their tracks." Sister Pinkham grew more talkative as she cooled. "Heard any news as you come along?"

"Some," vaguely responded Mr. Teaby. "Folks ginerally relates anythin' that 's occurred since they see me before. I ain't no great hand for news, an' never was."

"Pity 'bout *you*, Uncle Teaby! There, anybody don't like to have deaths occur an' them things, and be unawares of 'em, an' the last to know when folks calls in." Sister Pinkham laughed at first, but said her say with spirit.

"Certain, certain, we ought all of us

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to show an interest. I did hear it reported that Elder Fry calculates to give up preachin' an' go into the creamery business another spring. You know he 's had means left him, and his throat 's kind o' give out; trouble with the pipes. I called it brown caters, an' explained nigh as I could without hurtin' of his pride that he 'd bawled more 'n any pipes could stand. I git so wore out settin' under him that I feel to go an' lay right out in the woods arterwards, where 't is still. 'T won't never do for him to deal so with callin' his cows; they 'd be so aggravated 't would be more 'n any butter business could bear."

"You had n't ought to speak so light now; he 's a very feelin' man towards any one in trouble," Sister Pinkham rebuked the speaker. "I set consider'ble by Elder Fry. You sort o' divert yourself dallying round the country with your essences and remedies, an' you ain't never sagged down with no settled grievance, as most do. Think o' what the Elder 's be'n through, a-losin' o' three good wives. I 'm one o' them that ain't found life come none too easy, an' Elder Fry's preachin' stayed my mind consider'ble."

"I s'pose you 're right, if you think you be," acknowledged the little man humbly. "I can't say as I esteem myself so fortunate as most. I 'm a lonesome creatur', an' always was; you know I be. I did expect somebody 'd engage my affections before this."

"There, plenty 'd be glad to have ye."

"I expect they would, but I don't seem to be drawed to none on 'em," replied Mr. Teaby, with a mournful shake of his head. "I 've spoke pretty decided to quite a number in my time, take 'em all together, but it always appeared best not to follow it up; an' so when I 'd come their way again I 'd laugh it off or somethin', in case 't was referred to. I see one now an' then that I kind o' fancy, but 't ain't the real thing."

"You must n't expect to pick out a handsome gal, at your age," insisted Sister Pinkham, in a business-like way. "Time 's past for all that, an' you 've got the name of a rover. I 've heard some say that you was rich, but that ain't everythin'. You must take who you can git, and look you out a good home; I would. If you was to be taken down with any settled complaint, you 'd be distressed to be without a place o' your own, an' I 'm glad to have this chance to tell ye so. Plenty o' folks is glad to take you in for a short spell, an' you 've had an excellent chance to look the ground over well. I tell you you 're beginnin' to git along in years."

"I know I be," said Mr. Teaby. "I can't travel now as I used to. I have to favor myself. I do' know but I be spoilt for settlin' down. This business I never meant to follow stiddy, in the fust place; 't was a means to an end, as one may say."

"Folks would miss ye, but you could take a good long trip, say spring an' fall, an' live quiet the rest of the year. What if they do git out o' essence o' lemon an' pep'mint! There 's sufficient to the stores; 't ain't as 't used to be when you begun."

"There 's Ann Maria Hart, my oldest sister's daughter. I kind of call it home with her by spells and when the travelin' 's bad."

"Good King Agrippy! if that 's the best you can do, I feel for you," exclaimed the energetic adviser. "She 's a harmless creatur' and seems to keep ploddin', but slack ain't no description, an' runs on talkin' about nothin' till it strikes right in an' numbs ye. She 's pressed for house room, too. Hart ought to put on an addition long ago, but he 's too stingy to live. Folks was tellin' me that somebody said to him how he 'd got a real good, stiddy man to work with him this summer. 'He 's called a very pious man, too, great hand in meetin's, Mr. Hart,' says they; an' says he, 'I 'd

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have you rec'lect he 's a-prayin' out o' my time!' Said it hasty, too, as if he meant it."

"Well, I can put up with Hart; he 's near, but he uses me well, an' I try to do the same by him. I don't bange on 'em; I pay my way, an' I feel as if everythin' was temp'rary. I did plan to go way over North Dexter way, where I 've never be'n, an' see if there wa'n't somebody, but the weather ain't b'en settled as I could wish. I 'm always expectin' to find her, I be so," — at which I observed Sister Pinkham's frame shake.

I felt a slight reproach of conscience at listening so intently to these entirely private affairs, and at this point reluctantly left my place and walked along the platform, to remind Sister Pinkham and confiding Mr. Teaby of my neighborhood. They gave no sign that there was any objection to the presence of a stranger, and so I came back gladly to the baggage truck, and we all kept silence for a little while. A fine flavor of extracts was wafted from the valise to where I sat. I pictured to myself the solitary and hopeful wanderings of Mr. Teaby. There was an air about him of some distinction; he might have been a decayed member of the medical profession. I observed that his hands were unhardened by any sort of rural work, and he sat there a meek and appealing figure, with his antique hat and linen duster, beside the well-wadded round shoulders of friendly Sister Pinkham. The expression of their backs was most interesting.

"You might express it that I 've got quite a number o' good homes; I 've got me sorted out a few regular places where I mostly stop," Mr. Teaby explained presently. "I like to visit with the old folks an' speak o' the past together; an' the boys an' gals, they always have some kind o' fun goin' on when I git along. They always have to git me out to the barn an' tell me, if they 're a-courtin', and I fetch an' carry for 'em in that case, an' help out all I can. I 've made peace when they got into some o' their misunderstandin's, an' them times they set a good deal by Uncle Teaby; but they ain't all got along as well as they expected, and that 's be'n one thing that 's made me desirous not to git fooled myself. But I do' know as folks would be reconciled to my settlin' down in one place. I 've gathered a good many extry receipts for things, an' folks all calls me somethin' of a doctor; you know my grand'ther was one, on my mother's side."

"Well, you 've had my counsel for what 't is wuth," said the woman, not unkindly. "Trouble is, you want better bread than 's made o' wheat."

"I 'm 'most ashamed to ask ye again if 't would be any use to lay the matter before Hannah Jane Pinkham?" This was spoken lower, but I could hear the gentle suggestion.

"I 'm obleeged to *you*," said the lady of Mr. Teaby's choice, "but I ain't the right one. Don't you go to settin' your mind on me; 't ain't wuth while. I 'm older than you be, an' apt to break down with my rheumatic complaints. You don't want nobody on your hands. I 'd git a younger woman, I would so."

"I 've be'n a-lookin' for the right one a sight o' years, Hannah Jane. I 've had a kind o' notion I should know her right off when I fust see her, but I 'm afeard it ain't goin' to be that way. I 've seen a sight o' nice, smart women, but when the thought o' you was so impressed on my mind day before yisterday" —

"I 'm sorry to disobleege you, but if I have anybody, I 'm kind o' half promised to Elder Fry," announced Sister Pinkham bravely. "I consider it more on the off side than I did at first. If he 'd continued preachin' I 'd favor it more, but I dread havin' to 'tend to a growin' butter business an' to sense them new machines. 'T ain't as if he 'd 'stablished it. I 've just begun to have things

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easy; but there, I feel as if I had a lot o' work left in me, an' I don't know 's 't is right to let it go to waste. I expect the Elder would preach some, by spells, an' we could ride about an' see folks; an' he 'd always be called to funerals, an' have some variety one way an' another. I urge him not to quit preachin'."

"I 'd rather he ondertook 'most anythin' else," said Mr. Teaby, rising and trying to find the buttons of his linen duster.

I could see a bitter shade of jealousy cloud his amiable face; but Sister Pinkham looked up at him and laughed. "Set down, set down," she said. "We ain't in no great hurry;" and Uncle Teaby relented, and lingered. "I 'm all out o' rose-water for the eyes," she told him, "an' if you 've got a vial o' lemon left that you 'll part with reasonable, I do' know but I 'll take that. I 'd rather have caught you when you was outward bound; your bag looks kind o' slim."

"Everythin' 's fresh-made just before I started, 'cept the ginger, an' that I buy, but it 's called the best there is."

The two sat down and drove a succession of sharp bargains, but finally parted the best of friends. Mr. Teaby kindly recognized my presence from a business point of view, and offered me a choice of his wares at reasonable prices. I asked about a delightful jumping-jack which made its appearance, and wished very much to become the owner, for it was curiously whittled out and fitted together by Mr. Teaby's own hands. He exhibited the toy to Sister Pinkham and me, to our great pleasure, but scorned to sell such a trifle, it being worth nothing; and beside, he had made it for a little girl who lived two miles further along the road he was following. I could see that she was a favorite of the old man's, and said no more about the matter, but provided myself, as recommended, with an ample package of court-plaster, "in case of accident before I got to where I was going," and a small bottle of smelling-salts, described as reviving to the faculties.

Then we watched Mr. Teaby plod away, a quaint figure, with his large valise nearly touching the ground as it hung slack from his right hand. The greenish-brown duster looked bleak and unseasonable as a cloud went over; it appeared to symbolize the youthful and spring-like hopes of the wearer, decking the autumn days of life.

"Poor creatur'!" said Sister Pinkham. "There, he doos need somebody to look after him."

She turned to me frankly, and I asked how far he was going.

"Oh, he 'll put up at that little gal's house an' git his dinner, and give her the jumpin'-jack an' trade a little; an' then he 'll work along the road, callin' from place to place. He 's got a good deal o' system, an' was a smart boy, so that folks expected he was goin' to make a doctor, but he kind o' petered out. He 's long-winded an' harpin', an' some folks prays him by if they can; but there, most likes him, an' there 's nobody would be more missed. He don't make no trouble for 'em; he 'll take right holt an' help, and there ain't nobody more gentle with the sick. Always has some o' his nonsense over to me."

This was added with sudden consciousness that I must have heard the recent conversation, but we only smiled at each other, and good Sister Pinkham did not seem displeased. We both turned to look again at the small figure of Mr. Teaby, as he went away, with his queer, tripping gait, along the level road.

"Pretty day, if 't wa'n't quite so warm," said Sister Pinkham, as she rose and reached for her bandbox and bundle, to resume her own journey. "There, if here ain't Uncle Teaby's umbrilla! He forgits everythin' that belongs to him but that old valise. Folks would n't know him if he left that. You may as

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well just hand it to Asa Briggs, the depot-master, when he gits back. Like 's not the old gentleman 'll think to call for it as he comes back along. Here 's his fan, too, but he won't be likely to want that this winter."

She looked at the large umbrella; there was a great deal of good material in it, but it was considerably out of repair.

"I don't know but I 'll stop an' mend it up for him, poor old creatur'," she said slowly, with an apologetic look at me. Then she sat down again, pulled a large rolled-up needlebook from her deep and accessible pocket, and sewed busily for some time with strong stitches.

I sat by and watched her, and was glad to be of use in chasing her large spool of linen thread, which repeatedly rolled away along the platform. Sister Pinkham's affectionate thoughts were evidently following her old friend.

"I 've a great mind to walk back with the umbrilla; he may need it, an' 't ain't a great ways," she said to me, and then looked up quickly, blushing like a girl. I wished she would, for my part, but it did not seem best for a stranger to give advice in such serious business. "I 'll tell you what I will do," she told me innocently, a moment afterwards. "I 'll take the umbrilla along with me, and leave word with Asa Briggs I 've got it. I go right by his house, so you need n't charge your mind nothin' about it."

By the time she had taken off her gold-bowed spectacles and put them carefully away and was ready to make another start, she had learned where I came from and where I was going and what my name was, all this being but poor return for what I had gleaned of the history of herself and Mr. Teaby. I watched Sister Pinkham until she disappeared, umbrella in hand, over the crest of a hill far along the road to the eastward.

Sarah Orne Jewett.

SONNET.

THEY say — I count it truth — a master's hand
That swept the strings of his loved instrument,
While all the mighty soul of him was bent
To catch the inspiration, in one grand,
Supreme attempt to answer the demand
Of Spirit, snapped the chords whereon it leant
Too heavily, save one; yet through that went
Unstayed the message all might understand!

So when the Almighty breathes upon his seer
And fain would speak to men, with awful pain
The heartstrings thrilling, ringing loud and clear,
Snap one by one, unequal to the strain:
But God's a Master-Player, — ye shall hear
His truth though only one weak chord remain.

David W. M. Burn.

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THE BEGUM'S DAUGHTER

XXVII.

Vrouw Lysbeth Wickoff was, in her own way, as interesting as her cousin, Madam Van Cortlandt, although, being but a farmer's wife, she lacked something of the grand air of her kinswoman. Let it not be thought, however, that the good widow was wanting in presence. Credible tradition represents her as of a strictly imposing personality: her ample figure, aside from the impressiveness which belongs to mere area-displacement, had a suggestion of seasoned energy; her rounded shoulders, of fardels borne; her big seamed hands, of the plough-handle, which at need she had not shrunk from griping, and of the lesser mattock; while her shrewd, resolute face, with its ingrained weather-worn bloom, was saved from hardness by touches of womanly sympathy and mother-kindliness.

If these various marks of individuality be thought insufficient to justify her high standing as a leader in the little village of Vlacktebos, where she lived, let it be added that Vrouw Wickoff was mistress of a comfortable estate, comprising a snug homestead and a large farm under good cultivation.

That Dame Lysbeth dwelt alone was no fault of her own; for her husband had died in the course of nature, and of her two children, Grietje, her daughter, had married a young minister, whom the Classis had recently called back to Amsterdam, while Marten, her son, had gone to be a sea-captain in command of a goodly bark which his fond mother had built for him with her own dowry increased by years of hoardings.

But the widow did not suffer herself to mope under this desertion of kith and kin. There was in her none of the fibre that gathers moss. She was not of the sort to let her limbs stiffen, her blood stagnate, and her feelings grow morbid, knitting stockings in the chimney-nook, while there was so much stirring work at hand to be done.

Seldom need the born toiler go in search of a vineyard, and Vrouw Lysbeth found ample scope for her energies in lending a helpful hand to Dominie Varick with his struggling little church, in works of benevolence among her neighbors, and in the care of her own people and estate.

In this last field she had already gained an enviable repute, not only as a prudent huysvrouw, but as a cunning tiller of the soil. There was an air of order, industry, and thrift about the widow's messuage which roiled the gall of divers small-minded fellow-cultivators in the town, who were loath to confess that a woman could outstrip them in good husbandry. Whether it was from prodigality in manuring, judgment in planting, or care in harvesting, there was no gainsaying the result. It was common talk that the Wickoff farm was better managed than during old Marten's life; it was plain enough, too, that its owner was beforehand with the world, and no thanks to anybody but herself.

Notwithstanding this bustling and successful life, Dame Lysbeth did not suffer her social interests and sympathies to languish. She was a woman and a mother, and it may be safely assumed that many a stifled yearning stirred her ample bosom, unknown by the world, as she sat of an evening by her well-winged hearth.

Deep and genuine was the good woman's joy, therefore, on receiving one day a letter from cousin Gertryd, saying that Steenie, who had been lying for weeks at death's door from a lung fever, brought on by reckless exposure at the

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time of the late executions, was now convalescent, that the doctor had ordered him sent to the country and turned out to pasture like a colt, and that thereupon nothing would serve the junker's whim but going to Vlacktebos.

Cousin Lysbeth, be it said, lost no time in sending back a cordial answer, and straightway bestirred herself to make ready for the invalid, who had been aforetime a frequent visitor at her house, and who, indeed, after her own little brood, stood highest in her favor.

The widow's dwelling, without and within, had a winning air of homeliness. The house looked not so much like something built as like something which had grown out of the ground. Long, low, and rambling, it had a grotesque resemblance to a big mushroom, with its heavy roof sweeping in a curved line from the ridge-pole almost to the ground, save where, in front, it was poked up, visor-fashion, to give place to the broad front stoop, which, with its comfortable benches and riot-running vines, seemed to woo the dusty wayfarer to rest and coolness. The heavy wooden shutters, pierced with crescent-shaped slits to let in the light, were, day-times, swung back and fastened by long, twisted, S-shaped irons. In the gable abutting upon the highway might be found evidences of the solidity and age of the homestead in the massive stone masonry supporting the base of the chimney, and in the rude iron figures, giving the date of construction, imbedded in the rough-cast of the upper wall. At the corners stood two large casks to catch the rain-water. Over against the back door was a detached kitchen for the slaves, while on a plateau below the level of the house a line of out-buildings, including two roomy barns, surrounded an ample cow-yard, in one corner of which bubbled a never-failing spring.

It was early summer; the bustle of planting was over, the house had been cleaned from cellar to garret, and the widow was in the best possible trim for company.

The visitor did not wait for a second bidding. He came riding up to the door on a pillion one afternoon, accompanied by one of his father's clerks and his old negro nurse.

Notwithstanding the care taken in his removal, he was a good deal shaken by the undue exertion. The hospitable look of the old house, the motherly figure of cousin Lysbeth in her white cap and homespun petticoat, standing in the doorway, with both her arms extended in widest welcome, brought a smile to his tired eyes, and he suffered himself to be lifted down like a child and led into the cozy parlor, where he could scarcely walk upright without bumping his towering head.

He looked around the room with a convalescent gleam of satisfaction to find nothing displaced from its old-time order: the wide fireplace filled with fresh oak-boughs; the shining andirons; the pale pink hearth-tiles; the two snowy goose-wings standing upright on either hand; the floor sanded in the familiar waving pattern; the dark old cupboard in the corner on its huge ball-feet; the low, straight-backed chair at the window with its puffy feather cushion, and the silk patchwork bag hanging from the back filled with unfinished knitting; the little table holding the big Amsterdam Bible with its burnished clasps; the two old prints on the wainscoted wall, depicting terrific naval battles won by noted Dutch admirals, which no doubt inspired young Marten with his wild longing for a seafaring life; the sacred guest-bed, in a deep niche at the end of the room, supporting, on its four fluted posts, a tester hung with gay chintz to match the counterpane and the covering of the padded old comfort-chair standing hard by in the corner.

At the first glance of her experienced eye, cousin Lysbeth saw the state her patient was in, and assumed masterful

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control of him. Asking no questions, she took off his wraps, settled him in the big chair, peremptorily forbade him to move or to talk, and, beckoning his attendants, went away to the kitchen. Coming back after a little with a glass of wine and a toothsome morsel, and finding the junker too tired to eat, she promptly put him to bed, darkened the room, and left him to sleep. Finding, on a second visit, a half hour afterward, that he was staring awake and in a high fever, she posted off one of her slaves to New Utrecht for Dr. Staats, and in the mean time administered an herb draught of her own brewing.

Although nominally in the next village, the Staats farm was, in point of fact, not far away; for Vrouw Lysbeth herself lived close upon the boundary line. Near or far, the doctor took his time, and chose not to come until the next day, when he found the junker somewhat revived after a good night's sleep.

While studying his patient's symptoms, the doctor talked in a neighborly way with Vrouw Wickoff about the planting of corn, the promise of calves, the fattening of pigs, and the like farmer's gossip. The patient listened with an air of deep content. It was part of the cure, this country talk; he assimilated it as a tonic; its earthy, out-of-door tone accorded so perfectly with notes of crowing cocks, of lowing cattle, with snatches of bird-song and the whole full-throated chorus of field and barn-yard.

In due time the doctor took his leave, promising to send some medicine of his own compounding; vastly better, of course, than cousin Lysbeth's draught, for it had a villainous taste and a Latin name rotundly accented on the antepenult.

Cousin Lysbeth cared not a fig for the Latin or the doctor's wise look, only in the case of Gertryd's child she chose not to take any chances. She failed not, however, to vent sundry sarcasms on doctors in general when the medicine failed to arrive, and she perforce had recourse again to the despised herb tea.

Next day, thanks to nature and cousin Lysbeth, the patient was so much improved that he begged to be taken out; and his nurse, being happily a believer in fresh air and sunshine, lost no time in bringing forth the big chair to the most sheltered corner of the stoop, where, having tucked in her charge with the responsible air of one conscious of skill and well content at having an occasion to display it, went away to her dairy.

Entrance to Vrouw Wickoff's dairy was forbidden to all the world save one or two discreet women-servants. Naturally, this spot more than any other in the house was the object of her jealous care, as it was the source of her highest triumph as a huysvrouw. The very approach to it on a summer's day was refreshing, with its cool air, its delicious fragrance of fresh butter and new curds. Once past the threshold, the widow gave herself up with professional gravity to its cares and duties: skimming the thick yellow cream with her own hands; peeping with jealous eye, from time to time, into the deep churn which a stout negress pumped up and down; adjusting the press upon the green cheeses; scanning with sharp eye the stone-flagged floor, the whitewashed walls, the well-scrubbed shelves, lest haply a stray insect or floating speck of dirt smirch the awful purity of the odorous cell.

Meantime, Steenie, left to himself upon the stoop, watched the white clouds sail up the sky, watched the waving tree-tops, or followed the humming-birds among the flower-beds; listening the while to the chit-chat of the robins in the orchard, the tinkling warble of the bobolink in the distant meadow, the crickets in the blooming clover, and through all and over all the soughing accompaniment of the summer breeze.

Soothed by these combined influences,

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the junker was fast nodding off to sleep, when he was aroused by the sharp clatter of a horse's feet close by in the highway. The noise stopped at his kinswoman's gate. Then followed a murmur of voices and a burst of laughter, and the next minute, with romping step, a girl came dashing around the corner, cleared with a bound the three broad stone doorsteps, and was about to lay hold of the knocker, when she saw him and drew back.

"Catalina!"

The smile faded from her lips; she caught anew her spent breath, and with swift hand adjusted her disordered dress.

"I thought you were in bed," she said, and looked away with an air of embarrassment.

"I am sorry not to be sick enough to suit you."

Casting a look askance at his wasted figure, she reddened at the reproach.

"I am come — my father sent me — to bring you some medicine."

"So! You are very good. Stay! draw up yonder bench. Medicine! Sit you down now, and tell me about it."

It was still the same old tone of good-humored condescension, as to a child. The little frown and slight drawing up of her figure, by which she mutely protested against this persistent insinuation of infancy, were lost upon the languid junker.

"Vrouw Wickoff is within?" she asked, ignoring the invitation.

"Yes," he answered, with a look of amusement at the little snub, "but she likes not to be interrupted at her butter-making. See, here is a bench."

"I — my sister is waiting at the gate, on a pillion."

"Go fetch her in straightway. Cousin Lysbeth will be glad to have you at dinner. You may tie the horse."

"Thank you much, but we have to go to the dominie's. I cannot stay," moving away, then stopping and hesitating. "Here is the medicine."

"You may put it on the bench, since you will not stay."

"These powders are to be taken once in four hours, and" —

The junker shook his head peevishly.

— "and a spoonful of this," holding out a vial, "on going to bed."

"I cannot remember all that," closing his eyes wearily.

"'T is to be well shaken before using, and" —

"Go tell it to cousin Lysbeth," moving impatiently in his chair, and groaning as if in pain.

"You want something?"

"If I had anybody to attend me."

She stood looking at him with a comical mixture of compassion and irritation.

"If it be — I will — what is it?"

"A draught of syllabub."

"I will call Vrouw Wickoff."

"There is no need; 't is on the table within, — the blue jug."

She went quickly and brought the draught, which he barely tasted.

"Is that all?" she asked, as he handed back the jug.

"No."

She looked a little exasperated.

"The flies are biting me."

"If I knew where a fan was to be had!"

He waved his hand toward the parlor. She hastened away, and came back directly with a partridge-tail, spread, and finished at the node with a bit of ribbon.

What with her impatience and his nerveless grasp, the fan fell between them; whereupon, reaching forward to pick it up, he lost his balance and toppled forward in a heap to the floor. With a look of alarm and sympathy she sprang to help him, which she could do only by actually lifting him in her arms. Hardly was he seated in the chair, however, when, with a deep blush, she cleared herself from this involuntary embrace, darted into the house, found the pantry, handed the medicine to the astonished

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Vrouw Wickoff, repeated the directions in a breathless tone, and was away around the back of the house like a whirlwind.

The clatter of horse's feet in the road was the first notice Steenie had of her going.

Breathing the pure country air and fed upon cousin Lysbeth's goodies, Steenie presently began to pick up. A very unexpected token of good-will came to him one morning in the shape of a note from the begum, tendering him, with many superfluous compliments, the use of her palanquin during his convalescence. On the heels of the bearer of the note, that there might be no room for declining, came the airy little vehicle itself.

Cousin Lysbeth was at first in much doubt about trusting her patient's neck in such an outlandish conveyance, but one or two trial trips silenced her objections.

Thenceforth, accordingly, Steenie took an outing every day. Lying at length, with the curtains thrown back, and borne along by two stout men, he visited all his favorite haunts in the country-side.

More from habit than the expectation of bagging any game, he took along his gun, and swept with roving eye the sideway coverts on the march.

One day, having had the good luck to shoot an overbold rabbit, and coming soon after to a pretty opening in the woods, the fancy seized him to picnic on the spot and cook his own dinner.

So sending home one of his bearers for a basket of necessaries and the other in search of water, he busied himself in making a fire and dressing the rabbit.

Wearied by the unaccustomed effort, he threw himself down on the palanquin to watch the flames curl and crackle among the dry boughs he had heaped together. In this quiet pastime he was presently disturbed by outcries for help, mingled, as it seemed, with the snarling of enraged beasts.

Without thought of the consequences, he loudly replied. Encouraged by his answer, the cries turned in his direction; they sounded nearer and nearer, and directly, with a prodigious rustling of leaves and snapping of twigs, out from a neighboring thicket rushed Catalina and her shepherd dog closely pursued by a bristling wolf. Although covered with blood and much worsted by the fray, the dog turned back at every few steps to renew the contest, thus giving his mistress a chance to gain ground which she failed not to improve.

Next to the French and the Indians, wolves ranked as the greatest pest of the early colonists. They were, however, held in contempt rather than dread, inasmuch as they seldom or never attacked human beings save where, as in this case, they were baited into a pursuing rage by dogs or sportsmen.

Like other youths of the day, Steenie had often hunted them, and now without alarm sat up on his couch, reached for his gun, and leveled it at the approaching beast. Directly he remembered that the precious charge had been wasted upon the rabbit. It was too late to mend the matter. Failing other missiles, he discharged at the enemy an ineffectual oath.

Meantime, Catalina, in an agony of fright, came rushing towards him, and took refuge behind the palanquin. The plucky dog, making a last stand in defense of his mistress, was overpowered and disabled, while, with an intent and unamiable expression, the wolf came bounding towards the palanquin.

Clubbing his gun, Steenie made a show of resistance, but, staggered by the onset of the beast, he was thrown back upon the couch, where he saved his throat only by the intervention of a plump cushion.

This, however, was but a makeshift; he had no strength to struggle with the brute; there was no help at hand; it was in all respects an unpleasant moment.

Happily, like other moments, it proved of limited duration. Directly he was

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vaguely conscious of an odor of smoke and singed hair in the palanquin. With a howl of pain the wolf dashed out. The junker feebly raised himself. There stood Catalina, quaking with terror, yet holding the exasperated beast at bay with a flaming brand. Again the unwary sportsman aimed a feeble blow with the butt of his flint-lock. Again the wolf turned upon him. Again Catalina interposed with her brand; whereupon, taking the hint, Steenie snatched a brand himself from the coals. Thus making common cause, they backed upon the fire and kept the wolf at bay. Opportunely, the slave sent for water appeared, bearing a dripping birch-bark measure. Steenie shouted to him. The man dropped his water, crept up softly behind, and with a powerful blow from a stout club laid the beast lifeless.

Exhausted by excitement and unusual exertion, Steenie, without a word, threw himself on the palanquin.

"You are hurt — he tore you — you are bleeding! Oh, I was the cause of it!" cried Catalina, rushing to his side. "Cato, where is Kouba? Kouba! Kouba! How dare you bring him so far from home? Get water — do you see how white he is? Kouba! Kouba, I say! Where is Kouba?"

The slave explained that his fellow had been sent back on an errand.

"I will take his place, then."

The man stared.

"Come, get to your poles! We must carry him home!"

"Stop! Hold, I say! I am not hurt. You shall not."

The feeble voice from within was unheeded.

In obedience to an imperative gesture from his mistress, the slave took his place, and despite all objections, protests, and threats from their passenger they set forth.

The road was none of the best, but happily the distance was not great, and by dint of frequent stops — during which the passenger showed symptoms of violence — the inexperienced young bearer stuck to her task with a staying power one would scarcely have expected, till they reached the highway, where the returning Kouba met and relieved her of the task.

Next day, what with the fatigue and excitement, the convalescent showed himself the worse for the adventure, and cousin Lysbeth accordingly kept him in bed.

To this hard discipline the patient yielded with sorry grace, as he lay among his pillows sniffing the fresh air which floated in through the open window, listening with eager ears to the varied sounds of life from without, and watching with wistful eyes the sunbeams which, streaming through the casement, lighted up here and there a tiny cresset among the grains of sand, and left a track of splendor along the jeweled floor.

In the course of the morning cousin Lysbeth was called to the door by a visitor, who would not heed the slave's bidding to enter. Through the open window the junker overheard, without scruple, bits of their talk.

"I trust he is none the worse for it?"

"Yes, but he is," answered downright Dame Lysbeth.

"Surely he is not brought to bed again?"

The patient's face wore a look of amused interest at the anxious tone of the inquiry.

"That is he."

"But — 't is not for long, think you?"

"God knows!"

The patient well-nigh betrayed himself by laughing aloud at this gloomy description of his state, thereby losing several sentences which followed. The next words that came to him were in the firm tones of cousin Lysbeth.

"You had best come in and see him yourself."

"No, no!" was the nervous answer.

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"What message will you please to leave?"

"I — I — none at all."

"I will say only you came to ask."

"I am come to do nothing of the sort."

The sharp tone of this retort clearly puzzled the matter-of-fact huysvrouw not a little, who asked bluntly, —

"For what, then, do you call me from my work and waste my time here?"

"I was passing, and — and stopped to — ask after your health."

"For me! best thanks! I never had a sick hour since Martie was born."

"I am glad, and I hope your family will soon be as well. Good-day, huysvrouw."

Uttering her parting salutation in a tone of stilted dignity, the visitor went her way.

Steenie, as it proved, suffered no lasting ill-effects from his adventure; it was only cousin Lysbeth's love of discipline which kept him housed for a day or two. He was soon on his feet, stronger than ever; so strong, in fact, that he declined the further use of the palanquin in a polite note which speedily brought the owner herself to wait upon him.

This visit proved, on more accounts than one, a notable experience. The begum had been invested with a new and indefinable interest ever since the wedding feast. Nor was her behavior on this occasion of a sort to lessen the impression.

For the first few minutes Steenie busied himself studying her very striking physical traits, as she exchanged greetings with his cousin. The two, as they sat before him, were at the poles of contrast. The delicacy of build, the elegance of dress and manner, the suggested subtlety of mind in every look and tone of the Oriental, could not on the round earth have found a better foil than in the massive bulk, the steady dignity, the simplicity of garb, and the uncompromising straightforwardness of the Dutch huysvrouw.

The junker's musings were presently interrupted by his visitor.

"And you, Mynheer, — I am glad from the heart to see you win back your health."

Steenie bowed and murmured thanks.

"But when you are quite well, then," insinuatingly, "you will fly away."

"That will not be for a good while yet," spoke up cousin Lysbeth, "if he shows not better sense in taking care of himself."

"Your cousin would like well to keep you, I am sure."

"No, she will be glad to be rid of me; I make too much trouble."

The visitor directed a puzzled, inquiring look at Vrouw Wickoff.

Cousin Lysbeth wagged her head, but would not be drawn into a disclaimer.

"You should rather come to live with her forever," went on the visitor, turning with watchful eyes from one to the other. "'T is sad to be alone, and here there is land, good land for fine plantations, where a junker may come and make a home of his own."

"'T is a good place to visit," said Steenie, with mock reserve, but directing at the same time a grateful glance at his kinswoman.

"But you have always the thought of going back?"

Steenie nodded.

"It must be, then, the heart is left yonder." The suggestion was accompanied by a searching glance and a quick withdrawal of the eyes.

A look of pain crossed the junker's face, and he became abstracted. Cousin Lysbeth noted the effect of the remark upon her patient, and, however much at a loss to account for it, instantly changed the subject.

"Your daughter is well, after all that the other day?"

"She is well," answered the begum, with a perplexed look.

"'T is a mercy they were not both torn in pieces," went on cousin Lysbeth.

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The begum turned from one to the other, with eyes full of the curiosity she thought it not polite to put into words.

"And carrying that — that thing such a distance, — 't was the work of a man!"

The listener bowed, with a blank expression.

"And after all she did, I warrant me the heedless boy yonder has not thanked her yet."

Aroused from his musings by this direct reference to himself, Steenie reviewed with a mind-flash the words which had been passing through his ears, and said quickly, —

"She would give me no chance."

By this time the begum's curiosity had reached a painful pitch, when cousin Lysbeth, suddenly fathoming her bewildered look, cried, —

"She did not tell you!"

The begum shook her head.

"Go on you, now, and tell her," said the dame to her cousin.

The story lost nothing in the grateful junker's recital. The begum's dark skin flushed as she listened; her breathless interest in the account constantly belying the affected indifference of her comments.

"It is nothing; but what danger for you! So! you then saved *her* life as well. You were weak, yes, yes — Catalina pitied you, she has a good heart — 't is nothing — yes, Catalina is brave — you were an old friend, she knew you yonder — 't is nothing — yet I am glad — yes, she is so shy — I will tell her — yes — all your thanks, but you must come yourself. Good-by — I keep you too long — I forget — forgive me! Madam, I await a visit from you; you will bring Mynheer. He should stay by you yet for a good while. I hope we shall see you many times. Good-by."

Steenie stared after their strange visitor, as deeply perplexed as cousin Lysbeth herself at her sudden agitation and abrupt departure.

XXVIII.

The begum had made a shrewd guess as to the drift of Steenie's yearnings. Long before cousin Lysbeth pronounced him well enough to go, his thoughts were plainly turning homeward, as appeared by divers toilfully composed and carefully sealed letters which he found means of sending up to town by the hands of neighboring farmers going to market. Getting back not a single word in return, he presently fell to moping. Vigilant cousin Lysbeth took alarm, and cast about for ways and means to distract his thoughts. She set him to mending tools and harness, sent him on ready-made errands, took him afield when overlooking the slaves, made him cast up farm accounts gathered here and there from chalked memoranda on the kitchen wall and the barn doors. Not that her own faithful memory needed any such mechanical aid, but because she was hard pushed to find fit work for a town-bred junker. Driven to straits, she one day took him to wait upon the Staatses, where the begum's marked chagrin at her daughter's absence greatly puzzled both her visitors.

All resources having been exhausted to content her homesick guest, cousin Lysbeth was fain at last to let him go, which she did with much reluctance and repeated warnings against youthful imprudence.

Arriving home, Steenie found in the outward aspect of the town an air of bustle and prosperity which it had never worn under Leisler; but from certain remarks exchanged between his father and mother at the supper-table, he drew a moral not to take for gold all that glittered.

The new governor, as it appeared, far from fulfilling the high hopes which his coming had aroused, had already slipped from the heroic niche in which he had been too hastily enshrined; while from

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certain dark hints let drop by his father, the watchful junker surmised that the violent measures wherewith the new administration had been inaugurated, instead of proving of wholesome efficacy, had spread far and wide the poison of a deeper disaffection.

The following morning, Madam Van Cortlandt stood upon the stoop when her son came out and passed down the steps. As a woman of the world, she let no trace of any thought or feeling stir her impassive face while noting the carefulness of his toilet, — his holiday coat, silk small-clothes, lace ruffles, and shining shoe-buckles. Whatever conclusions, indeed, she may have formed from his premature return home, from the loss of his habitual cheerfulness or the object of his present errand, she kept her own counsels, and with wise restraint bided her time.

As for Steenie, he was too preoccupied to think of small politics at the moment, to think of any disguise of his mood or purposes. Greeting his mother, therefore, dutifully yet mechanically, he went his way to the well-known brick house in the Strand.

Arrived at the door, however, he was seized with a passing agitation, — a natural result, perhaps, of some weeks of doubts and misgivings. Pausing at the bottom of the steps, he seemed not able to summon resolution to go in. After a moment's hesitation he turned and walked along to the Waterpoort, where he again came to a halt. Lingering here for several moments, he presently whirled about as if with a sudden return of firmness, briskly retraced his steps, mounted the stairs, and nervously sounded the knocker.

On being shown in, he found the little parlor empty; the windows shut, and the room darkened. An ominous silence, indeed, brooded over the whole house, as though the shadow of the late tragedy still lay dark and heavy upon the once bustling and happy home.

It seemed an age to the impatient junker before Hester appeared. He was shocked into uttering an exclamation at the change in her. It was not only that her bloom was gone, that she had lost contour, that her old look of serenity was wanting; here was another individuality. He was not of an age or experience for subtle theorizing. That such a sudden and violent development of latent traits could take place in a flesh-and-blood fellow-creature as would dominate her known and normal characteristics was a thing as unknown in his experience as it was undreamed of in his philosophy. Happily or unhappily, the thought did not even occur to him. He hastened with outstretched arms to meet his sweetheart. Regarding him with lack-lustre eyes, in which was no gleam of welcome, she endured his embrace without returning it. Fondly, eagerly, pityingly, he looked into her eyes. Their glance was petrifying, the old stony stare of the dungeon-cell.

"Hester, poor child! dear girl!"

He repeated the phrases over and over again, with every appealing and tender inflection. It was all he seemed able to say.

He led her presently to a chair. She sat down with an air of sufferance, as if waiting for him to have done. He was painfully discomfited; he tried to speak, but his voice stuck in his throat. Indeed, it was plain he was at an utter loss what to say. With whatever doubts and misgivings, he had come clearly enough expecting to resume their old relations. He was bewildered at finding it impossible, — at finding that the physical contiguity from which he had hoped so much brought no nearness; that between himself and this young creature who had grown to seem a part of his very being there had mysteriously intervened a yawning gulf, across which his piping human voice availed not to reach, and his pigmy arms stretched forth in vain to grasp back his treasure.

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Unconsciously he grew old in heart and brain, as he sat staring at his dumb companion, while the interminable minutes dragged along.

Had that blighting shadow fallen also upon him? Not unnaturally the thought occurred to him and haunted him, till it seemed as if he were indeed wrestling with some malign influence ambushed there in the darkened room.

"Hester, poor child! dear girl!" he kept repeating, as one who talks in sleep.

On a sudden impulse he took her hands; they rested cold and limp in his grasp, but it gave him courage to go on.

"I have been down with a fever. I was sent away to get well — down to cousin Lysbeth's — it was a long time — I wrote you letters."

She nodded, without raising her eyes from their fixed stare at the floor.

"And I thought of you, poor girl, all the time. It was hard to be so long away, but now I am well, now I am come back to stay; we shall be happy again. Do not shake your head, darling. Look at me; smile at me as you used to. Remember we have each other yet. Come, Hester, — listen to me, dear girl. Think how happy we used to be. We may be again, — why not? We have done no wrong to any one. When this — this awful — shall pass away, we may be happy again. Take comfort, Hester. Think not upon all *that* too much; think of the old times; think I am here, — that I am faithful to you, and" —

He stopped. Her lips moved; he leaned forward eagerly to catch her words, which came husky and grating, as from a voice unused for years.

"We are attainted!"

He studied her face with a puzzled look, as if she had spoken without sense. It was a full minute before he fathomed her meaning.

"And what then? Is it your fault? Is it for anything you have done? Does it make you anything other than what you were, — my own dear, faithful sweetheart!"

She shook her head, as if he were talking idly.

"It takes away your goods and estates. I am sorry for your mother, your brother and sisters, but *you* need think nothing of that; I shall have enough for both. Shake not your head, darling."

"We are attainted!" she said again, with the same barrenness of hope.

He released her hands, and cast himself back in his chair with a sigh of discouragement.

As they sat thus in silence, a door opened below-stairs, and the voice of her younger sister was heard softly calling to Hester. Realizing the uselessness of prolonging the interview, Steenie rose at once to go. She made no protest, but mechanically extended her hand. He put it aside, and took her tenderly in his arms.

"You are not well, poor child! You have not recovered from that — You will be better when I come again. I will come soon, darling. Good-by! Good-by!"

Pausing upon the stoop to shut the door gently behind him, the junker heard a strange voice in the garden, and, glancing over the wall, saw Barent walking with Cobus, among the vegetables. In the disturbed state of his feelings, it is doubtful whether the incident made even a passing impression upon his mind.

Next morning, overhearing his father express a purpose of sending a messenger to Hartford on important business, Steenie was somewhat startled at the suggestion of his own name by his mother, who urged it upon her husband with characteristic persistence. As for Steenie, he seemed at first not much pleased with the notion, but on a little reflection assented with a show of cheerfulness, not quite realizing the probable length of his absence.

He made no attempt to see Hester again before going; indeed, the impor-

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tance and responsibility of his new duties distracted his mind for the moment from thoughts of her. It proved business of a sort to try his metal. Realizing now the cause of his father's hesitation in committing it to hands so young and unskilled, he resolved to justify the confidence reposed in him.

Without mishap or adventure, he reached his destination, and acquitted himself creditably of his errand. The result was duly made known at home. At the end of several weeks, expecting daily his recall, he was met by a courier from his father with congratulations upon his success, accompanied by minutes of some other matters of moment in the Massachusetts, confided to his management at his mother's instance.

Despite this flattering commendation and the natural gratification at succeeding in his first mission, it was nevertheless with a feeling of keen disappointment that the junker turned his face towards Boston; and in the answer sent back to his father there was, mingled with many dutiful expressions, an unconscious little touch of resentment at his mother's interference.

The matter in the Massachusetts, as it proved, admitted not of such dispatch as the former. He was delayed many weeks, chafing at obstacles which he had not foreseen and could not surmount, so that before he again reached home several months had elapsed.

As he neared the city, his impatience to arrive became quite uncontrollable. Outstripping his escort, he cruelly spurred his jaded horse, to gain, needlessly, as it seemed, a few useless hours, and enter the town before nightfall. So, too, without any more tangible excuse, he went a foolish, roundabout course, in order to go in by way of the Waterpoort and ride along the Strand.

Passing the little brick house, he came almost to a halt, scanning with painful eagerness the door, the jealously shut windows, and every dumb brick, for some intelligence of Hester. Seeing no sign of life, the remembrance of his last visit perhaps recurred to him, for he repressed a shudder as he looked away.

Turning into the dock, he was aroused from his gloomy preoccupation by a sight which sent the spurs into his horse's sides, so that the poor brute reared and cavorted, despite his spent condition. There, at a few paces distant, looking calmly towards him, stood Hester, attended by Barent Rhynders. She showed no surprise at his sudden appearance, but, returning his agitated greeting by a grave courtesy, passed along as if they had parted but yesterday.

Various adroit measures adopted by Madam Van Cortlandt, next morning, proved unavailing to keep her son at home. As soon as breakfast was over, without a minute's delay he proceeded to the Strand.

He found Hester in the garden with her sister. The latter ran away, but Hester came directly to meet him, with something of her old-time manner. His face brightened at once, its anxious look giving place to one of extreme agitation. He fairly stammered in his first hurried greeting.

"It is a long — long time — I thought not to be gone so far, else I — it was business of moment — I could not come — you understood, I hope, I could not — I wrote you by every hand — if you had the letters, you know why I was so neglectful, as it seemed."

"Yes," she said, with a little movement to free herself from his embrace, "I had the letters. I was glad to hear you were in health and well quit of your business."

He looked confounded at her tone. It was that of one who turns aside from an absorbing purpose to answer a child. It was many minutes before he could rally self-possession to go on, as they walked back and forth, back and forth, between the rows of currant bushes.

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Breaking free at last from the constraint which seemed every moment weighing down upon him with deadlier force, he suddenly stopped, and cried with impetuous directness : —

" Hester, what is between us? What is it, I say? A terrible trial has come upon you. You suffered cruelly. I suffered too, in thinking of your pain, in seeing you crushed under such affliction. I have waited long for the wound to heal. It was a grievous wound, but I was not the cause of it. I have done you no wrong. I have been faithful to you through all. You are pledged to me. I am come at last to claim you ! "

She made a movement as if to speak, but he went on with added vehemence :

" 'T is time we stopped dwelling upon the past and turned to the future. We cannot amend the wrong that has been done ; we must bethink us how to make the best of the life that is left us."

They had reached the bottom of the garden, and turned to come back. Her attitude, standing before him in the path as if barring the way ; her utterance, slow at first, but gathering impetus as she went on ; her controlled manner and measured tones, all combined to give a memorable emphasis to her answer. Meantime, to her astonished hearer, her expression seemed visibly to change, as she talked, from the callowness of youth to the maturity of middle age. It was as if a mask had dropped, showing how suffering had developed the woman, morally and mentally, with the ripening efficacy of years.

" Amend the wrong ! No ! Neither can we avenge crime, nor wash out the stain of blood-guiltiness that lies upon the heads of those yonder, nor call back martyred men from the grave ! Vengeance is for God ; He has said it ! "

The tone in which the words were uttered might have startled her hearer, had he not been so impressed with the transformation wrought in the speaker herself that he scarcely heeded her words.

" Such part of the wrong we may not amend," she went on, " but we may amend such as lies in the power of man. We may wipe out the blot put upon the names of the dead. We may show their innocence to the world. We may have their memory restored to honor in men's mouths. We may wipe out the taint that has been put upon their innocent wives and children."

Awed by this sudden revelation of character, the junker stood for a space helplessly staring ; it was only when the prolonged silence became painful that he made a blundering attempt to speak.

" I thought not that — that you would take the matter so much to heart, Hester — I — I " — he floundered, realizing, perhaps, that this was an unhappy beginning. " I hope you may gain your end, — 't is just you should ; but — but touching yourselves, I hope this blow may not fall so heavily as you fear."

" 'T is for mother we fear."

" Surely, after so grievous an affliction, she will be suffered to live in peace."

" How and where ? She is driven from home already."

" You will quit this house ? "

" What choice have we ? They turn us out ; 't is a favor we have been suffered to stay these few weeks while mother kept her bed, brought to the very door of death by their doings. Better for her she had died ! "

" Good God ! 't will surely not be pushed ; 't is wanton cruelty ; if it were but made known to his Excellency " —

" Think you we would ask mercy of that butcher ? " she broke in, almost fiercely.

" What then, my poor girl, will you do ? "

" Sister Walters will take us in till Cobus has a hearing of his Majesty. He has gone to England ; he will make known all this wickedness to the king."

" But if he fail ? Your brother is young and unused to courts."

" He will not fail ; if his Majesty be

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a man, and not a monster, he cannot but listen."

"My poor Hester, 't is hard to get speech with the king; one must have influence at court; there are a thousand difficulties in the way; his Majesty is plagued with much business."

"If he will not hear, he can read, at least. Cobus has it all writ down in petitions signed by a hundred names of good, God-fearing men."

"A flood of petitions pour into the royal closet every day; the king has not time for half of them. He hands them over to his ministers. These gentlemen are not fond of giving themselves pains. They take their own time; they hear all sides of the story; they put the business off from time to time; new matters arise, public needs which claim a preference. Years go by; suitors grow old and gray and faint-hearted, and give up the hopeless quest. I would not discourage you by this gloomy picture; I would but save you from disappointment."

"We shall bide our time," she said resolutely, "and give them no peace till our suit is granted."

"But I — we — where is my part in all this waiting? I might aid; I would fain help in anything I may," he added, in a halting way. "I might at least be of comfort to you. Surely *we* need not await the issue of all this. We are pledged for better or worse; not for one day, but for life. We may be married all the same; you will not be less dutiful as a daughter that you have become a wife."

She hesitated; for the first time, it seemed, a moment's thought of him crossed her mind. There was a touch of commiseration in the look she turned upon him; her voice softened, but in no whit abated its tone of inflexible resolution, as she answered, —

"Never will I give a thought to marriage until this wrong be amended."

A deep flush overspread his face. He stood looking steadily at her until it slowly faded, giving place to a pallor which made his sun-browned cheeks look russet-hued.

"Never?"

"Never!"

The word fell from her lips like an iron bolt, but no bolt ever moulded could have dealt him such a blow. Large beads of moisture gathered on his forehead, and slowly trickled over his temples, as he stood with clenched hands and lips tight pressed, like one controlling himself under some physical pang.

Her eyes were turned away, perhaps purposely, to avoid witnessing the effect of her words. Each must have felt there was no more to be said. The painful silence which ensued was broken by the sound of some commotion at the house, — the sound of hurrying feet and some one calling. Hester turned to look. Her sister came hurrying down the path, followed by Vrouw Leisler crying, with awe-stricken looks, —

"My child, my child, it has come at last! Your father is avenged!"

"What?"

"He is dead, — that wicked man."

"Who?"

"The governor!"

"God's hand is in it!"

XXIX.

The stir caused in the community by the death of Governor Sloughter was due not so much to grief felt for the defunct as to anxiety regarding the character and policy of his successor. This question, indeed, so engrossed the attention of all those in any way connected with the administration that for a while nothing else was thought of.

There is, therefore, less ground for surprise that Madam Van Cortlandt did not at once remark her son's sudden despondency. Once returned to home duties, however, the watchful matron was

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not long blind to the matter. Without troubling herself overmuch to account for it, she recognized the need of some timely intervention, and with a mother's license took measures accordingly. No treatment, it would seem, could have been better suited to the case than that adopted, — of sending him off on a trip to the West Indies with his cousin, Captain Marten Wickoff.

Steenie made no objection, nor expressed any gratification. He merely assented, and looked on in apathy while his energetic mother made all the arrangements for the voyage. Bluff Captain Marten had many private interviews with his kinswoman, and was doubtless given a hint as to the trouble from her point of view. Between them they kept secret the day and hour of sailing, so that the unsuspicious junker was hustled on board the bark early one morning, before any "compunctious visitings of nature" could interfere with their resolve.

Captain Marten faithfully followed his private instructions. No leisure was given his young cousin for indulging in morbid fancies. He was kept hard at work and fed upon plain fare, until he came gradually to find in the free, wholesome life, so varied by chance and peril, the solace felt by many another world-sick wretch before him. Moreover, the voyage was destined to be savored by a sort of sea-spice he little dreamed of. Two days out from Sandy Hook a sail hove in sight, which behaved in a way not at all satisfactory to Captain Marten. After studying the stranger for a long time in silence, on a sudden he threw down his glass and flew about with very unusual activity. Ordering all sail on and the decks cleared, he presently directed the crew to make ready to throw over the cargo or stand to their guns, as the case required.

Steenie heard all this with a little creeping of the flesh. Heretofore a pirate had been merely a bugbear; he now saw the fabulous monster realized. As in the nursery tales pirates are always burned, sunk, or brought to some condign end, he felt no doubt of the issue in this case, and, arming himself with a cutlass, longed to come to close quarters. His enthusiasm, however, was somewhat dampened by the captain's blunt answer to his questioning as to the result of such a proximity.

"Do! damn 'em! They 'd sink the ship, and make every mother's son of us walk the plank!"

In view of this very uncomfortable probability, the valiant landsman straightway developed more interest in the captain's policy of "showing his heels."

Thanks to his stout vessel and good seamanship, the prudent captain at last succeeded in outstripping his enemy, and escaping with the loss of only a small part of his cargo.

Matters had come to such a pass that this experience, far from being unusual, was accepted as one of the ordinary perils of the sea; and although the rest of the voyage was accomplished in safety, they learned, on arriving at St. Kitt's, of a large Spanish galleon which had been sunk in plain sight of the town by the rakish stranger who had given them chase; and coming ashore, they found the most absorbing topic among sailors and merchants was the doings of these bold bandits, — all of which made a profound impression upon Steenie's mind, as will presently appear.

If no other gain came from the voyage, Madam Van Cortlandt noted with silent satisfaction its effect upon her son's health. Madam naturally enough concluded that one who could eat and sleep like this sun-bronzed junker was no longer a fit subject for anxiety. That she pushed further her conclusions, and founded upon this experience certain sweeping and unsafe generalizations, was the fault of her temperament. Lest any undue prejudice attach to her on account of it, let it be remembered that

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dogmatism is for the most part harmless; that it is always amusing, and indeed, viewed aright, is not without a certain ethical value.

Nobody in the world, perhaps, was more perfectly aware of madam's limitations than her own silent and conservative husband. At the same time, nobody listened to her with greater deference. When, therefore, upon this occasion, she emphatically pronounced her conclusions upon youthful affairs of the heart, and the proper treatment of them after the fashion of croup and measles, he dryly coughed, without committing himself by an assent.

Steenie, meanwhile, unconscious of being an object of concern, felt himself under no obligation to confirm his mother's theories, but went his own gait, in a state of apathy not to be easily distinguished from content.

Returning in this listless mood from a long ride northward upon the island, about a week after his landing, he was aroused by a sound of somebody running after him, and presently a breathless voice was heard calling him by name:

"Mynheer — Mynheer Stephanus!"

Turning, he saw Tryntie hurrying with might and main to overtake him.

"You, vrouw? I 'm glad to see you."

"Ei, Myn-Mynheer!" she gasped, coming up. "I thought never to see ye again. They — they said ye 'd gone beyond sea."

"So I did, and have come home again. How is Ripse these days?"

"The schelmje! — he grows like a weed."

"And Rip?"

"Ever the same; he is away at the market, or he 'd be glad of a sight o' ye. But I have n't run the breath out o' my body to tell my own affairs; I 've something for ye."

"So!"

"'T is yonder in the house; ye went so fast I could n't stay to bring it, but if ye 'll turn back" —

"What is it, then?"

The dame looked cautiously about, and lowered her voice.

"A letter!"

"For me?"

"Ye 'll need no help to guess who sends it."

It would have puzzled keener wits than Tryntie's to say whether the change which took place in the listener's countenance was due to pleasure or pain. Staring at her a moment while recovering from his astonishment, he said gravely,

"I will go."

Walking his horse to keep pace with the panting vrouw, he did not exchange another word with her, however, until they came to the house. Everything there looked much the same: the geese feeding on the green; the little stoop with its well-scrubbed benches; the tulip-beds, now filled with summer flowers; Ripse, much grown, in a little round cap, and a grotesque frock made from an old doublet of his father's, chasing the poultry with a stick, — all might have awakened old remembrances in the junker's bosom, if he had not been too preoccupied to take note of anything.

Tryntie did not keep him waiting; she came out unfolding a long piece of clean linen, from which she produced the precious letter.

Steenie took it, and, gazing at it a full minute in an abstracted way, rode off without breaking the seal, or even giving the little vrouw a word of thanks for her pains.

It was only when quite alone upon the highway that, dropping the reins upon his horse's neck, he read the letter. He read it, indeed, over and over again. Who will say he had not cause?

HONORED FREND, — It has come upon me sence seeing you I made an unfit answer to what you said to me meant in all love and kindness. Truely I have no cause to give any butt kind words as I have no other butt kind thouts

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towards you. My mind as you know was full off other things as God our Heavenly Father knows full well it had call to be.

For that I was always a stubborn and undutifull child to that dere and blissed martyr we have lost I am now arroused to a sinse of my great sin and wickedness and from this out must ever strive to make what poor amends in me lye in following his example and heeding his counsells remembered in my mind.

After some note taken off my feelings I find them still turned towards you much as of old butt my sinses are benumbed as it where and all within me seems awry. I am like a plant trod to earth and lift myself feebly from the dust all bruised and warped as I must never again expect to stand upright. See then what need I have to commend myself to God's Mercy by putting away all weak and foolish desires off my own heart and yield my thouts and strenth to lifting up from the foul mire and making clear off smirch the memory of that blissed one I held in such small esteem whiles living. Praying you then to think me not so much unmindfull off your true affection as pledged to a duty which holds me heart and soul

Your humble ser't

HESTER LEISLER.

The reader was recalled to himself by his horse stopping before the city gate. Thrusting the letter into his pocket, he gathered up the reins, and, by the shortest way, proceeded to the little house in the Strand. He found it shut and deserted. He stared about in dismay. The house in its desolation rose before him a dumb but eloquent accuser, afflicting him with a sense of personal guiltiness.

He sat for a space as not knowing what to do; then bethinking him of Tryntie, turned and rode back to the bouwerie. The evening was warm, the door and windows stood open, and through the still air the discordant voice of the little huysvrouw was heard getting Ripse ready for bed.

Steenie stopped. Perhaps it was the song which reminded him of that time long ago when he first came to the bouwerie. Surely Tryntie's voice was one upon which to found a remembrance. Whatever the impulse, he yielded to it, and lingered at the door. Quite absorbed in her task, Tryntie held the fat, half-naked young one on her knee, beguiling him into spasms of laughter by some nursery trick, as she alternately slipped on and pulled off his bit of a night-gown, singing the while with unmodulated vigor, —

"Duur zat een Aapje op een stokje
Achter myn moeder's kenken deur
Hy had een gnatje in syn rokje
Duur stok dat schelmje syn kopje deur."

Waiting patiently until the game was ended and Ripse tucked into his cradle, Steenie presented himself, and, making known his errand, learned that Vrouw Leisler and her family were scattered among their friends and relatives, and that Hester was visiting Catalina at New Utrecht.

Madam Van Cortlandt was equally surprised and pleased, next morning, when Steenie announced his purpose of making a visit to Vlacktebos. She lost no time in making up a hamper of town delicacies, and sent him off with a redundancy of messages common to that time of infrequent intercourse.

The visit was a joyful surprise to cousin Lysbeth. She stood by chance on the stoop as Steenie came around the corner of the house, just before supper, and grasped him in her heartiest fashion. He was even more welcome than usual, for he brought the latest news from her darling Marten, and gave her, as they sat on the stoop in the evening, an account of his voyage, together with many details of her son's daily life, of which she had little notion.

Cousin Lysbeth was naturally interested and puzzled, next morning, when,

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directly after breakfast, her kinsman announced his intention of going to New Utrecht. She kept her firm lips shut, however, and asked no question; and as for Steenie, if by chance it occurred to him that his doings might awaken curiosity, he showed no disposition to gratify it.

Arrived at the doctor's door, he beheld a well-known person sitting in the cool shadow of the stoop, whom, from his disconcerted look, it was plain he had not thought of encountering.

"You are very welcome, Mynheer," said the lady, with a profound obeisance, blinking away industriously her first look of surprise and curiosity. "Vrouw Wickoff is well, I hope? She must be greatly rejoiced to see you so restored to health."

Steenie murmured some commonplace as he took off his broad-brimmed hat, seated himself upon the bench opposite his hostess, and looked wistfully about.

"It is pleasant to come to the country in the warm season," went on the lady, much busier with her private thoughts than with those she saw fit to put into words.

Her visitor assented absently, with furtive looks cast hither and thither.

"Your worshipful father and mother, — I hope they are in health?"

"They are both well, I thank you much."

A word in Hindostanee whispered apart to an Indian servant who sat on a straw mat just within the open door, and a tray was brought, holding a cool drink and some cakes, of which the guest partook as knowing not what else to do.

"'T is far away from the world, here among our bouweries; we hear only the echoes; 't is like opening a book when some one comes from town to tell us what passes," continued the begum, keeping up the conversation as a running accompaniment to her thoughts, while she studied the junker askance, and accounted in her own way for his abstraction.

"There is not much to tell," he answered, with signs of restiveness.

"Is there not great stir of late on account of the pirates?"

"To be sure; that there is, madam, a prodigious stir," with a touch of interest. "They are become a great plague; they are sweeping our commerce from the sea; the Lords of Trade are busy with the matter."

"'T is whispered here by mischief-makers his Mightiness is in league with them."

"Governor Fletcher! 'T is a great scandal!" cried Steenie indignantly. "He is an honest man, and gives himself up heart and soul to the good of the province. His health is broken by overwork and newness to the climate."

"I believe you; yet some there be, and not a few, scruple not to say it boldly, together with many other evil things of his Excellency. You know well them I mean," returned the lady significantly, curbing her tongue just in time from a closer description of a class among whom her own husband was known to be a leader. "They never forgive it that he holds no fellowship with the followers of that monster who met his deserts so long ago."

Old memories stirred within the junker as he gazed at his singular hostess, noted her eyes flash and her vibrant voice deepen in intensity. Notwithstanding his astonishment, however, he failed not to take instant advantage of the opportunity she had given him to lead the conversation in the direction he wished.

"Whatever the crimes of that wretch, 't is time they were forgotten."

"And who, pray you, keeps the memory of them fresh but his own friends?"

"Poor creatures, they are to be pitied."

"How pitied, when they fill all Eng-

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land and America with cries for vengeance?"

Leaning far forward, with her beady eyes fixed glaringly upon her visitor, the excited begum by turns tossed back the floating muslin head-gear from her heated face, and plucked with the vengeful movement of a bird of prey bits of down from a feather fan which she fluttered in her hands.

"Surely his family are innocent, yet are they branded with infamy, and cast out like beggars into the street."

"For the woman, for the children, give them back their poor belongings, — I would not have them suffer; but for *him*" — She finished her sentence with a violent gesture, and plucked again at her fan.

"I am glad to hear that you show kindness to the living, however you may feel towards the dead," said the junker significantly.

"'T is my husband does that," she rejoined, instantly and emphatically, as if to show her qualified approval of the act, "and Catalina, you know" —

Her hearer nodded, and while she still stuck at a word he came bluntly to the point towards which the whole conversation had tended.

"Hester is here. I would speak with her."

A look of mortification, quickly controlled, passed over the lady's tell-tale face.

"Yes, surely. 'T is most unlucky she is gone walking with my daughter, but they cannot be long; they will come back to dinner. You will wait?"

"With many thanks, no; if it please you, I will follow them."

"Ah, I am most wretched!" with an expression of mock despair. "If I but knew whither to send you!"

"Never fear! I shall not be long in finding them."

Seeing her visitor so determined, the lady made a show of catechising the slaves, and at last gained the information that the two girls had gone to a hill, not far off, overlooking the sea.

With a hurried leave-taking, the impatient junker strode off in the direction pointed out. Across some fields, through a wood, and up a gentle slope, and he was there.

The search was not a long one, for directly he came to the summit of the hill and looked about, there, under an oak-tree close at hand, sat the two maidens, busily engaged in closest talk.

Steenie coughed, and they both looked around. Catalina started up instantly, and a flush overspread her face. Hesitating a moment, she dropped a slight courtesy to the intruder, muttered a word to her friend, and turned to go.

Hester made a movement to clutch her by the petticoat, Steenie uttered a half-hearted protest, but the fugitive held her course, and was soon out of sight.

The two left behind found it an awkward meeting. It had been made worse, if possible, by Catalina's flight. Hester rose and gravely courtesied. Both stood silent for a space, not knowing what to say.

But the junker had come with a purpose, and he did not suffer it to grow cold. Making an impatient gesture as if to brush away the constraint which held them both dumb, he approached, and put forth his hand.

"I had your letter but yesterday," he said. "I am just come back from a voyage to the Antilles. I have been long away."

"I am glad to see you safe returned," she answered simply, but with a touch of consciousness which was wanting in their former interview.

"Your letter gave me great comfort," he went on, leaning against the tree, while she stood uneasily a little apart. "I know not why it should, unless it be that at our former meeting you" — he hesitated, stooped and picked up a dry twig, which he broke idly in his fingers — "you seemed not quite your real self."

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She looked troubled, but did not answer.

"For myself, I was so downcast that I was long time quite without hope, until little by little the thought came to me that your great affliction had unsettled your good sense, and turned you aside from a right way of thinking."

"I have but one way of thinking," — she spoke calmly and with a touch of pride, — "which is ever as God gives direction to my thoughts."

"'T is not safe to take for God's doing what may more likely be the effect of evil counsels forever sounded in your ears," he retorted, with a little heat.

"One needs not evil counsels to think amiss," was the instant reply, delivered in a tone coldly significant.

Directly Steenie saw his mistake, and as if relieved at having freed his mind of some long-stored bitterness answered with an utter change of voice and manner, a reminiscence of his old masterful way with the girl.

"Let us have done with upbraiding! Let us have done once and for all with bygones which had best be forgotten! We have both had trouble enough; we have both carried about sad looks and heavy hearts till 't is time we cast them off. Come, Hester! Come, sit you down now, dear girl, beside me, and remember only you are my sweetheart yet, and bethink you it rests only with ourselves whether our lives are to run to waste and nothingness, or we are to find some cheer and comfort in the days that are left to us."

As he spoke he threw himself on the ground at the foot of the tree, and motioned her to a place at his side; but she, with a look very ill at ease, remained standing.

"Hester, I say, come, sit you down. Let us have a talk like the old times. Tell me your mind. Show me your whole heart. If I hold still my old place *there*, then all is right yet."

She hesitated, still much discomfited.

"See, here is your seat waiting. Come," he continued half playfully, "you shall not escape. Come, I say, will you wait to be haled hither?"

With an embarrassed flush and no very good grace, she at last sat down by his side.

"Now," he cried, taking her hand and burying it out of sight between his own big palms, "what shall ever come between us again? Are we not happy? Are we not, eh, little one? I feel at least a thousand years younger than yesterday, and my heart, or whatever it be within me which feels, weighs but a feather, which this morning was a ton. Did I not do well to come and seek you out? And all, too, on account of your precious letter, which had well-nigh missed me! What, tongue-tied still?" he asked, with an anxious glance at her downcast face. "Have you then no word for me?"

Her whole person showed by certain nervous movements that she was making ready to speak, and clearly with the greatest effort. His face clouded, perhaps with a premonition, as he watched her, and waited in almost breathless suspense for her words.

"Glad would I be to take part in your cheer and speak some word which would answer to your hope or give you comfort, but" — she stopped, and plainly had to call up all her resources of firmness to go on — "but what can I say? As I set forth in my letter, my heart is still bound to you, but I can give no ear to my own inclinings. I must go the way laid out for me, I must do the work appointed for my hands."

The junker held fast his tongue, although an impulse of impatience convulsed his whole person.

"'T is a voice out of the grave calls me to this work, friends and kindred unite in it, whiles a still, small whisper within, which I know no other but as the voice of God, swells the cry, till I find no peace day or night but in thinking how

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best to compass this charge laid upon me."

"Listen, Hester," Steenie began, after a few minutes had passed in ominous silence, — began in a voice whose measured tone showed the restraint he had put upon himself. "Once more I say, Do all this that is required of you, do this which your conscience compels. I would not withhold you. But again I demand, What hinders you should be faithful to me as well? What makes it needful that whiles you are true to one you should be false to the other?"

"False!" she repeated, weighing the word a moment before proceeding; "'t is not a question of true or false; consider the matter only in a right light. What means the dominie when he reads out of the good book yonder that man cannot serve both God and Mammon? 'T is that a weak mortal cannot follow two paths at the same time. Either must he go the one shown of God, or that pointed out by his own selfish passions."

"Truly; and pray you tell me how long is it since I was exalted to the high post, in your esteem, of serving at need as type of greed and lust and all unrighteousness? There remains, it would seem, but the part of Beelzebub still unplayed."

Panoplied in that densest of all armor which turns the shafts of wit, she went on, without the least sense of smart, in a tone calmly controversial.

"Whiles I am true to a higher bidding I cannot well be *false* in any wise." That word plainly rankled in her mind, for she concentrated her attack upon it. "To be false to one's self is ofttimes to be true to God; 't is better, then, in that way to be false. What is false? 'T is but a word. I shall have no fear of any word whiles I have the sense of right action."

Starting up as if irritated beyond longer control, the junker made no answer, but paced swiftly up and down in the shadow of the tree. After a moment Hester rose also, and, carefully shaking the wrinkles out of her skirt, made a movement to go. He suddenly stopped in his feverish march.

"Is this, then, all the answer you would make?"

"What other can I give?" she asked, still shaking her skirt.

"You bid me wait for years as you would say, 'Wait till next Lord's Day morning!'"

"Why should you think 't will prove so long?" she asked, looking up from her adjusted drapery with untroubled eyes.

"What matter why? I have cause. I know after what manner they conduct these affairs. It will be for years, I say, for weary, hopeless years; it may be indeed for life itself. And all for what? What, tell me! A whim, a caprice. Oh, Hester, Hester," he cried, catching her passionately in his arms, "think what you are doing! Is my happiness nothing to you? Think of my misery! You will, you do, — I see it in your face." He covered her blooming cheek with kisses. "I knew you could not be so cruel. Say then you will come with me! Nay, you shall not go till you speak the word, — I swear you shall not! Now — now — there, I give you breath! Will you come with me, I say? There needs but one word to answer."

He released her. She was flustered by the embrace; her cheek was burning from the attack of his ardent lips. She smoothed back her disordered locks and adjusted her dainty cap, while her face settled slowly back into its old lines of calm inflexibility as she answered, —

"If it was but to follow my own heart" —

He saw the look, he heard the tone; it was enough. Waiting not for another word, he turned about and plunged out of view into the thicket.

Edwin Lassetter Bynner.

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MENS SANA.

In the hoary wine-cave's mirk
Genii of the vintage lurk, —
Potent genii shrewd and merry:
Burgundy and laughing Sherry,
Sweet Tokay and Muscatel,
That of flowers do taste and smell
(Fit to pledge with Ariel);
Cloying Port and blithe Champagne,
Greekish wines and wines of Spain, —
Jovial all, and all unsteady!
Subtle *liqueurs* strange and heady, —
Curaçoa and Anisette,
And Absinthe wooing to forget.
These besiege you as you fare
Groping from the upper air;
Tap nor spigot do they ask
To set them free from hoopèd cask.
If you be an anchorite,
They will take your brain by sleight,
Enter with the breath you draw,
And each pore will be a flaw
To let in the vinous rout.
But if there you drink a bout,
While the winking candle-ray
Lights the wine upon its way,
And the ancient cellarer prates
Mellowly of names and dates, —
Of holitides when Bacchus bled,
Of revels and of revelers fled, —
If a pledge or two you quaff,
At these genii you may laugh,
For their cunning in your veins
Makes you proof to all their trains.

Prince, my counsel scan and muse;
In this life of glimmering clues,
Where the wisest ofttimes slip,
Fare you not with unwet lip.
Drink you must the potion rife
Of the olden vintage Life;
So shall you be more exempt,
When the juggling genii tempt,
Than the pale recluse whose cell
Harbors many a traitor fell.
Caution shall more peril meet

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Than ardor borne on glowing feet.
Fiery spirit safe shall tent
Its own deathless element,
And the poet, mad from birth,
Is the sanest soul on earth!

Edith M. Thomas.

OVER THE TEACUPS.

II.

TO THE READER.

Personal and Confidential.

SOME of my friends may remember that an article bearing the above title appeared in the number of this magazine for March, 1888. It was my hope to have continued my contributions to The Atlantic, under the same title, for a number of successive months. I made no positive engagements, but I hinted my hopes and intentions clearly enough, as I remember. The course of events interrupted all my plans, and it is only very recently that I have felt able or willing to resume any kind of literary labor.

I know that it is a hazardous experiment to return to these pages, where in days long past I have found a generous welcome. But my readers have been, and are, a very kind constituency. I think there are many among them who would rather listen to an old voice they are used to than to a new one of better quality, even if the "childish treble" should betray itself now and then in the tones of the over-tired organ. But there must be others, — I am afraid many others, — who will exclaim: "He has had his day, and why can't he be content? We don't want literary *revenants*, superfluous veterans, writers who have worn out their welcome and still insist on being attended to. Give us something fresh, something that belongs to our day and generation. Your morning draught was well enough, but we don't care for your evening slip-slop. You are not in relation with us, with our time, our ideas, our aims, our aspirations."

Alas, alas! my friend, — my young friend, for your hair is not yet whitened, — I am afraid you are too nearly right. No doubt, — no doubt. Tea-cups are not coffee-cups. They do not hold so much. Their pallid infusion is but a feeble stimulant compared with the black decoction served at the morning board. And so, perhaps, if wisdom like yours were compatible with years like mine, I should drop my pen and make no further attempts upon your patience.

But suppose that a writer who has reached and passed the natural limit of serviceable years feels that he has some things which he would like to say, and which may have an interest for a limited class of readers, is he not right in trying his powers and calmly taking the risk of failure? Does it not seem rather lazy and cowardly, because he cannot "beat his record," or even come up to the level of what he has done in his prime, to shrink from exerting his talent, such as it is, because he has outlived the period of his greatest vigor? A singer who is no longer equal to the trials of opera on the stage may yet please at a chamber concert or in the drawing-room. There is one gratification an old author can afford a certain class of critics: that, namely, of comparing him as he is with what he was. It is a plea-

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sure to mediocrity to have its superiors brought within range, so to speak; and if the ablest of them will only live long enough, and keep on writing, there is no pop-gun that cannot reach him. But I fear that this is an unamiable reflection, and I am at this time in a very amiable mood.

I confess that there is something very agreeable to me in renewing my relations with the readers of this magazine. Were it but for a single number, it would give me a pleasant glimpse of the time when I was always to be found somewhere between its covers. Many of my readers — if I can lure any from the pages of younger writers — will prove to be the children, or the grandchildren, of those whose acquaintance I made something more than a whole generation ago. I could depend on a kind welcome from my contemporaries, — my coevals. But where *are* those contemporaries? *Ay de mi!* as Carlyle used to exclaim, — Ah, dear me! as our old women say, — I look round for them, and see only their vacant places. The old vine cannot unwind its tendrils. The branch falls with the decay of its support, and must cling to the new growths around it, if it would not lie helpless in the dust. This paper is a new tendril, feeling its way, as it best may, to whatever it can wind around. The thought of finding here and there an old friend, and making, it may be, once in a while a new one, is very grateful to me. The chief drawback to the pleasure is the feeling that I am submitting to that inevitable exposure which is the penalty of authorship in every form. A writer must make up his mind to the possible rough treatment of the critics, who swarm like bacteria whenever there is any literary material on which they can feed. I have had as little to complain of as most writers, yet I think it is always with reluctance that one encounters the promiscuous handling which the products of the mind have to put up with, as much as the fruit and provisions in the market-stalls. I had rather be criticised, however, than criticise; that is, express my opinions in the public prints of other writers' work, if they are living, and can suffer, as I should often have to make them. There are enough, thank Heaven, without me. We are literary cannibals, and our writers live on each other and each other's productions to a fearful extent. What the mulberry leaf is to the silk-worm, the author's book, treatise, essay, poem, is to the critical larvæ that feed upon it. It furnishes them with food and clothing. The process may not be agreeable to the mulberry leaf or to the printed page; but without it the leaf would not have become the silk that covers the empress's shoulders, and but for the critic the author's book might never have reached the scholar's table. Scribblers will feed on each other, and if we insist on being scribblers we must consent to be fed on. We must try to endure philosophically what we cannot help, and ought not, I suppose, to wish to help.

It is the custom at our table to vary the usual talks by the reading of short papers, in prose or verse, by one or more of The Teacups, as we are in the habit of calling those who make up our company. Thirty years ago, one of our present circle — "Teacup Number Two," the Professor — read a paper on Old Age, at a certain Breakfast-table, where he was in the habit of appearing. That paper was published in this magazine, and has since seen the light in other forms. He did not know so much about old age then as he does now, and would doubtless write somewhat differently if he took the subject up again. But I found that it was the general wish that another of our company should let us hear what he had to say about it. I received a polite note, requesting me to discourse about old age, inasmuch as I

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was particularly well qualified by my experience to write in an authoritative way concerning it. The fact is that I — for it is myself who am speaking — have recently arrived at the age of threescore years and twenty, — fourscore years we may otherwise call it. In the arrangement of our table, I am Teacup Number One, and I may as well say that I am often spoken of as The Dictator. There is nothing invidious in this, as I am the oldest of the company, and no claim is less likely to excite jealousy than that of priority of birth.

I received congratulations on reaching my eightieth birthday, not only from our circle of Teacups, but from friends, near and distant, in large numbers. I tried to acknowledge these kindly missives with the aid of a most intelligent secretary; but I fear that there were gifts not thanked for, and tokens of good-will not recognized. Let any neglected correspondent be assured that it was not intentionally that he or she was slighted. I was grateful for every such mark of esteem; even for the telegram from an unknown friend in a distant land, for which I cheerfully paid the considerable charge which the sender knew it would give me pleasure to disburse for such an expression of friendly feeling.

I will not detain the reader any longer from the essay I have promised.

This is the paper read to The Teacups.

It is in A Song of Moses that we find the words, made very familiar to us by the Episcopal Burial Service, which place the natural limit of life at threescore years and ten, with an extra ten years for some of a stronger constitution than the average. Yet we are told that Moses himself lived to be a hundred and twenty years old, and that his eye was not dim nor his natural strength abated. This is hard to accept literally, but we need not doubt that he was very old, and in remarkably good condition *for a man of his age.* Among his followers was a stout old captain, Caleb, the son of Jephunneh. This ancient warrior speaks of himself in these brave terms: "Lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet, I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me; as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out and to come in." It is not likely that anybody believed his brag about his being as good a man for active service at eighty-five as he was at forty, when Moses sent him out to spy the land of Canaan. But he was, no doubt, lusty and vigorous *for his years,* and ready to smite the Canaanites hip and thigh, and drive them out, and take possession of their land, as he did forthwith, when Moses gave him leave.

Grand old men there were, three thousand years ago! But not all octogenarians were like Caleb, the son of Jephunneh. Listen to poor old Barzillai, and hear him piping: "I am this day fourscore years old; and can I discern between good and evil? Can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? Wherefore, then, should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king?" And poor King David was worse off than this, as you all remember, at the early age of seventy.

Thirty centuries do not seem to have made any very great difference in the extreme limits of life. Without pretending to rival the alleged cases of life prolonged beyond the middle of its second century, such as those of Henry Jenkins and Thomas Parr, we can make a good showing of centenarians and nonagenarians. I remember Dr. Holyoke, of Salem, son of a president of Harvard College, who answered a toast proposed in his honor at a dinner given to him on his hundredth birthday.

"Father Cleveland," our venerated city missionary, was born June 21, 1772, and died June 5, 1872, within a little

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more than a fortnight of his hundredth birthday. Colonel Perkins, of Connecticut, died this year after celebrating his centennial anniversary.

Among nonagenarians, three whose names are well known to Bostonians, Lord Lyndhurst, Josiah Quincy, and Sidney Bartlett, were remarkable for retaining their faculties in their extreme age. That patriarch of our American literature, the illustrious historian of his country, is still with us, his birth dating in 1800.

Ranke, the great German historian, died at the age of ninety-one, and Chevreul, the eminent chemist, at that of a hundred and two.

Some English sporting characters have furnished striking examples of robust longevity. In Gilpin's Forest Scenery there is the story of one of these horseback heroes. Henry Hastings was the name of this old gentleman, who lived in the time of Charles the First. It would be hard to find a better portrait of a hunting squire than that which the Earl of Shaftesbury has the credit of having drawn of this very peculiar personage. His description ends by saying, "He lived to be an hundred, and never lost his eyesight nor used spectacles. He got on horseback without help, and rode to the death of the stag till he was past fourscore."

Everything depends on habit. Old people can do, of course, more or less well, what they have been doing all their lives; but try to teach them any new tricks, and the truth of the old adage will very soon show itself. Mr. Henry Hastings had done nothing but hunt all his days, and his record would seem to have been a good deal like that of Philippus Zaehdarm in that untranslatable epitaph which may be found in Sartor Resartus. Judged by its products, it was a very short life of a hundred useless twelvemonths.

It is something to have climbed the white summit, the Mont Blanc of fourscore. A small number only of mankind ever see their eightieth anniversary. I might go to the statistical tables of the annuity and life insurance offices for extended and exact information, but I prefer to take the facts which have impressed themselves upon me in my own career.

The class of 1829 at Harvard College, of which I am a member, graduated, according to the triennial, fifty-nine in number. It is sixty years, then, since that time; and as they were, on an average, about twenty years old, those who survive must have reached fourscore years. Of the fifty-nine graduates ten only are living, or were at the last accounts; one in six, very nearly. In the first decade after graduation, when we were between twenty and thirty years old, we lost three members, — about one in twenty; between the ages of thirty and forty, eight died, — one in seven of those the decade began with; from forty to fifty, only two, — or one in twenty-five; from fifty to sixty, eight, — or one in six; from sixty to seventy, fifteen, — or two out of every five; from seventy to eighty, twelve, — or one in two. The greatly increased mortality which began with the fifth decade went on steadily increasing. At sixty we come "within range of the rifle-pits," to borrow an expression from my friend Weir Mitchell.

Our eminent classmate, the late Professor Benjamin Peirce, showed by numerical comparison that the men of superior ability outlasted the average of their fellow-graduates. He himself lived a little beyond his threescore and ten years. James Freeman Clarke almost reached the age of eighty. The sixth decade brought the fatal year for Benjamin Robbins Curtis, the great lawyer, who was one of the judges of the Supreme Court of the United States; for the very able chief justice of Massachusetts, George Tyler Bigelow; and for that famous wit and electric centre of social life, George T. Davis. At the last

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annual dinner every effort was made to bring all the survivors of the class together. Six of the ten living members were there, — six old men in the place of the thirty or forty classmates who surrounded the long, oval table in 1859, when I asked, "Has there any old fellow got mixed with the boys?" — "boys" whose tongues were as the vibrating leaves of the forest; whose talk was like the voice of many waters; whose laugh was as the breaking of mighty waves upon the seashore. Among the six at our late dinner was our first scholar, the thorough-bred and accomplished engineer who held the city of Lawrence in his brain before it spread itself out along the banks of the Merrimac. There, too, was the poet whose National Hymn, "My Country, 't is of thee," is known to more millions, and dearer to many of them, than all the other songs written since the Psalms of David. Four of our six were clergymen; the engineer and the present writer completed the list. Were we melancholy? Did we talk of graveyards and epitaphs? No, — we remembered our dead tenderly, serenely, feeling deeply what we had lost in those who but a little while ago were with us. How could we forget James Freeman Clarke, that man of noble thought and vigorous action, who pervaded this community with his spirit, and was felt through all its channels as are the light and the strength that radiate through the wires which stretch above us? It was a pride and a happiness to have such classmates as he was to remember. We were not the moping, complaining graybeards that many might suppose we must have been. We had been favored with the blessing of long life. We had seen the drama well into its fifth act. The sun still warmed us, the air was still grateful and life-giving. But there was another underlying source of our cheerful equanimity, which we could not conceal from ourselves if we had wished to do it. Nature's kindly anodyne is telling upon us more and more with every year. Our old doctors used to give an opiate which they called "the black drop." It was stronger than laudanum, and, in fact, a dangerously powerful narcotic. Something like this is that potent drug in Nature's pharmacopœia which she reserves for the time of need, — the later stages of life. She commonly begins administering it at about the time of the "grand climacteric," the ninth septennial period, the sixty-third year. More and more freely she gives it, as the years go on, to her gray-haired children, until, if they last long enough, every faculty is benumbed, and they drop off quietly into sleep under its benign influence.

Do you say that old age is unfeeling? It has not vital energy enough to supply the waste of the more exhausting emotions. Old Men's Tears, which furnished the mournful title to Joshua Scottow's Lamentations, do not suggest the deepest grief conceivable. A little breath of wind brings down the raindrops which have gathered on the leaves of the tremulous poplars. A very slight suggestion brings the tears from Marlborough's eyes, but they are soon over, and he is smiling again as an allusion carries him back to the days of Blenheim and Malplaquet. Envy not the old man the tranquillity of his existence, nor yet blame him if it sometimes looks like apathy. Time, the inexorable, does not threaten him with the scythe so often as with the sand-bag. He does not cut, but he stuns and stupefies. One's fellow-mortals can afford to be as considerate and tender with him as time and nature.

There was not much boasting among us of our present or our past, as we sat together in the little room at the great hotel. A certain amount of self-deception is quite possible at threescore years and ten, but at threescore years and twenty Nature has shown most of those who live to that age that she is earnest, and means to dismantle and have done

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with them in a very little while. As for boasting of our past, the *laudator temporis acti* makes but a poor figure in our time. Old people used to talk of their youth as if there were giants in those days. We knew some tall men when we were young, but we can see a man taller than any one among them at the nearest dime museum. We had handsome women among us, of high local reputation, but nowadays we have professional beauties who challenge the world to criticise them as boldly as Phryne ever challenged her Athenian admirers. We had fast horses, — did not "Old Blue" trot a mile in three minutes? True, but there is a three-year-old colt just put on the track who has done it in a little more than two thirds of that time. It seems as if the material world had been made over again since we were boys. It is but a short time since we were counting up the miracles we have lived to witness. The list is familiar enough: the railroad, the ocean steamer, photography, the spectroscope, the telegraph, telephone, phonograph, anæsthetics, electric illumination, — with such lesser wonders as the sewing-machine and the bicycle. And now, we said, we must have come to the end of these unparalleled developments of the forces of nature. We must rest on our achievements. The nineteenth century is not likely to add to them; we must wait for the twentieth century. Many of us, perhaps most of us, felt in that way. We had seen our planet furnished by the art of man with a complete nervous system: a spinal cord beneath the ocean, secondary centres — ganglions — in all the chief places where men are gathered together, and ramifications extending throughout civilization. All at once, by the side of this talking and light-giving apparatus, we see another wire stretched over our heads, carrying force to a vast metallic muscular system, — a slender cord conveying the strength of a hundred men, of a score of horses, of a team of elephants. The lightning is tamed and harnessed, the thunderbolt has become a common carrier. No more surprises in this century! A voice whispers, *What next?*

It will not do for us to boast about our young days and what they had to show. It is a great deal better to boast of what they could *not* show, and, strange as it may seem, there is a certain satisfaction in it. In these days of electric lighting, when you have only to touch a button and your parlor or bedroom is instantly flooded with light, it is a pleasure to revert to the era of the tinder-box, the flint and steel, and the brimstone match. It gives me an almost proud satisfaction to tell how we used, when those implements were not at hand or not employed, to light our whale-oil lamp by blowing a live coal held against the wick, often swelling our cheeks and reddening our faces until we were on the verge of apoplexy. I love to tell of our stage-coach experiences, of our sailing-packet voyages, of the semi-barbarous destitution of all modern comforts and conveniences through which we bravely lived and came out the estimable personages you find us. Think of it! All my boyish shooting was done with a flint-lock gun; the percussion lock came to me as one of those new-fangled notions people had just got hold of. We ancients can make a grand display of minus quantities in our reminiscences, and the figures look almost as well as if they had the plus sign before them.

I am afraid that old people found life rather a dull business in the time of King David and his rich old subject and friend, Barzillai, who, poor man, could not have told a teal from a canvas-back, nor enjoyed a symphony concert, if they had had those luxuries in his day. There were no pleasant firesides, for there were no chimneys. There were no daily newspapers for the old man to read, and he could not read them if there were,

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with his dim eyes, nor hear them read, very probably, with his dulled ears. There was no tobacco, a soothing drug, which in its various forms is a great solace to many old men and to some old women, — Carlyle and his mother used to smoke their pipes together, you remember.

Old age is infinitely more cheerful, for intelligent people at least, than it was two or three thousand years ago. It is our duty, so far as we can, to keep it so. There will always be enough about it that is solemn, and more than enough, alas! that is saddening. But how much there is in our times to lighten its burdens! If they that look out at the windows be darkened, the optician is happy to supply them with eye-glasses for use before the public, and spectacles for their hours of privacy. If the grinders cease because they are few, they can be made many again by a third dentition, which brings no toothache in its train. By temperance and good habits of life, proper clothing, well-warmed, well-drained, and well-ventilated dwellings, and sufficient, not too much exercise, the old man of our time may keep his muscular strength in very good condition. I doubt if Mr. Gladstone, who is fast nearing his eightieth birthday, would boast, in the style of Caleb, that he was as good a man with his axe as he was when he was forty, but I would back him, — if the match were possible, — for a hundred shekels, against that overconfident old Israelite, to cut down and chop up a cedar of Lebanon. I know a most excellent clergyman, not far from my own time of life, whom I would pit against any old Hebrew rabbi or Greek philosopher of his years and weight, if they could return to the flesh, to run a quarter of a mile on a good, level track.

We must not make too much of such exceptional cases of prolonged activity. I often reproached my dear friend and classmate, James Freeman Clarke, that his ceaseless labors made it impossible for his coevals to enjoy the luxury of that repose which their years demanded. A wise old man, the late Dr. James Walker, president of Harvard University, said that the great privilege of old age was the *getting rid of responsibilities*. These hard-working veterans will not let one get rid of them until he drops in his harness, and so gets rid of them and his life together. How often has many a tired old man envied the superannuated family cat, stretched upon the rug before the fire, letting the genial warmth tranquilly diffuse itself through all her internal arrangements! No more watching for mice in dark, damp cellars, no more awaiting the savage gray rat at the mouth of his den, no more scurrying up trees and lamp-posts to avoid the neighbor's cur who wishes to make her acquaintance! It is very grand to "die in harness," but it is very pleasant to have the tight straps unbuckled and the heavy collar lifted from the neck and shoulders.

It is natural enough to cling to life. We are used to atmospheric existence, and can hardly conceive of ourselves except as breathing creatures. We have never tried any other mode of being, or, if we have, we have forgotten all about it, whatever Wordsworth's grand ode may tell us we remember. Heaven itself must be an experiment to every human soul which shall find itself there. It may take time for an earth-born saint to become acclimated to the celestial ether, — that is, if time can be said to exist for a disembodied spirit. We are all sentenced to capital punishment for the crime of living, and though the condemned cell of our earthly existence is but a narrow and bare dwelling-place, we have adjusted ourselves to it, and made it tolerably comfortable for the little while we are to be confined in it. The prisoner of Chillon

> regained his freedom with a sigh,

and a tender-hearted mortal might be

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pardoned for looking back, like the poor lady who was driven from her dwelling-place by fire and brimstone, at the home he was leaving for the "undiscovered country."

On the other hand, a good many persons, not suicidal in their tendencies, get more of life than they want. One of our wealthy citizens said, on hearing that a friend had dropped off from apoplexy, that it made his mouth water to hear of such a case. It was an odd expression, but I have no doubt that the fine old gentleman to whom it was attributed made use of it. He had had enough of his gout and other infirmities. Swift's account of the Struldbrugs is not very amusing reading for old people, but some may find it a consolation to reflect on the probable miseries they escape in not being doomed to an undying earthly existence.

There are strange diversities in the way in which different old persons look upon their prospects. A millionaire whom I well remember confessed that he should like to live long enough to learn how much a certain fellow-citizen, a multimillionaire, was worth. One of the three nonagenarians specially referred to expressed himself as having a great *curiosity* about the new sphere of existence to which he was looking forward.

The feeling must of necessity come to many aged persons that they have outlived their usefulness; that they are no longer wanted, but rather in the way, drags on the wheels rather than helping them forward. But let them remember the often-quoted line of Milton, —

"They also serve who only stand and wait."

This is peculiarly true of them. They are helping others without always being aware of it. They are the shields, the breakwaters, of those who come after them. Every decade is a defence of the one next behind it. At thirty the youth has sobered into manhood, but the strong men of forty rise in almost unbroken rank between him and the approaches of old age as they show in the men of fifty. At forty he looks with a sense of security at the strong men of fifty, and sees behind them the row of sturdy sexagenarians. When fifty is reached, somehow sixty does not look so old as it once used to, and seventy is still afar off. At sixty the stern sentence of the burial service seems to have a meaning that one did not notice in former years. There begins to be something personal about it. But if one lives to seventy he soon gets used to the text with the threescore years and ten in it, and begins to count himself among those who by reason of strength are destined to reach fourscore, of whom he can see a number still in reasonably good condition. The octogenarian loves to read about people of ninety and over. He peers among the asterisks of the triennial catalogue of the University for the names of graduates who have been seventy years out of college and remain still unstarred. He is curious about the biographies of centenarians. Such escapades as those of that terrible old sinner and ancestor of great men, the Reverend Stephen Bachelder, interest him as they never did before. But he cannot deceive himself much longer. See him walking on a level surface, and he steps off almost as well as ever; but watch him coming down a flight of stairs, and the family record could not tell his years more faithfully. He cut you dead, you say? Did it occur to you that he could not see you clearly enough to know you from any other son or daughter of Adam? He said he was very glad to hear it, did he, when you told him that your beloved grandmother had just deceased? Did you happen to remember that though he does not allow that he is deaf, he will not deny that he does not hear quite so well as he used to? No matter about his failings; the longer he holds on to life, the longer he makes life seem to all

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the living who follow him, and thus he is their constant benefactor.

Every stage of existence has its special trials and its special consolations. *Habits* are the crutches of old age; by the aid of these we manage to hobble along after the mental joints are stiff and the muscles rheumatic, to speak metaphorically, — that is to say, when every act of self-determination costs an effort and a pang. We become more and more automatic as we grow older, and if we lived long enough should come to be pieces of creaking machinery like Maelzel's chess-player, — or what that seemed to be.

Emerson was sixty-three years old, the year I have referred to as that of the grand climacteric, when he read to his son the poem he called Terminus, beginning, —

> "It is time to be old,
> To take in sail.
> The God of bounds,
> Who sets to seas a shore,
> Came to me in his fatal rounds
> And said, 'No more!'"

It was early in life to feel that the productive stage was over, but he had received warning from within, and did not wish to wait for outside advices. There is all the difference in the world in the mental as in the bodily constitution of different individuals. Some must "take in sail" sooner, some later. We can get a useful lesson from the American and the English elms on our Common. The American elms are quite bare, and have been so for weeks. They know very well that they are going to have storms to wrestle with; they have not forgotten the gales of September and the tempests of the late autumn and early winter. It is a hard fight they are going to have, and they strip their coats off and roll up their shirt-sleeves, and show themselves bare-armed and ready for the contest. The English elms are of a more robust build, and stand defiant, with all their summer clothing about their sturdy frames. They may yet have to learn a lesson of their American cousins, for notwithstanding their compact and solid structure they go to pieces in the great winds just as ours do. We must drop much of our foliage before winter is upon us. We must take in sail and throw over cargo, if that is necessary, to keep us afloat. We have to decide between our duties and our instinctive demand of rest. I can believe that some have welcomed the decay of their active powers because it furnished them with peremptory reasons for sparing themselves during the few years that were left them.

Age brings other obvious changes besides the loss of active power. The sensibilities are less keen, the intelligence is less lively, as we might expect under the influence of that narcotic which Nature administers. But there is another effect of her "black drop" which is not so commonly recognized. Old age is like an opium-dream. Nothing seems real except what is unreal. I am sure that the pictures painted by the imagination — the faded frescos on the walls of memory — come out in clearer and brighter colors than belonged to them many years earlier. Nature has her special favors for her children of every age, and this is one which she reserves for our second childhood.

No man can reach an advanced age without thinking of that great change to which, in the course of nature, he must be so near. It has been remarked that the sterner beliefs of rigid theologians were apt to soften in their later years. All reflecting persons, even those whose minds have been half palsied by the deadly dogmas which have done all they could to disorganize their thinking powers, — all reflecting persons, I say, must recognize, in looking back over a long life, how largely their creeds, their course of life, their wisdom and unwisdom, their whole characters, were shaped by the conditions which surrounded them. Little children they came from the hands of the Father of all; little children in

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their helplessness, their ignorance, they are going back to Him. They cannot help feeling that they are to be transferred from the rude embrace of the boisterous elements to arms that will receive them tenderly. Poor planetary foundlings, they have known hard treatment at the hands of the brute forces of nature, from the control of which they are soon to be set free. There are some old pessimists, it is true, who believe that they and a few others are on a raft, and that the ship which they have quitted, holding the rest of mankind, is going down with all on board. It is no wonder that there should be such when we remember what have been the teachings of the priesthood through long series of ignorant centuries. Every age has to shape the Divine image it worships over again, — the present age and our own country are busily engaged in the task at this time. We unmake Presidents and make new ones. This is an apprenticeship for a higher task. Our doctrinal teachers are unmaking the Deity of the Westminster Catechism and trying to model a new one, with more of modern humanity and less of ancient barbarism in his composition. If Jonathan Edwards had lived long enough, I have no doubt his creed would have softened into a kindly, humanized belief.

Some twenty or thirty years ago, I said to Longfellow that certain statistical tables I had seen went to show that poets were not a long-lived race. He doubted whether there was anything to prove they were particularly short-lived. Soon after this, he handed me a list he had drawn up. I cannot lay my hand upon it at this moment, but I remember that Metastasio was the oldest of them all. He died at the age of eighty-four. I have had some tables made out, which I have every reason to believe are correct so far as they go. From these, it appears that twenty English poets lived to the average age of fifty-six years and a little over. The eight American poets on the list averaged seventy-three and a half, nearly, and they are not all dead yet. The list including Greek, Latin, Italian, and German poets, with American and English, gave an average of a little over sixty-two years. Our young poets need not be alarmed. They can remember that Bryant lived to be eighty-three years old, that Longfellow reached seventy-five and Halleck seventy-seven, while Whittier is living at the age of nearly eighty-two. Tennyson is still writing at eighty, and Browning seems in flourishing health and vigor at seventy-seven.

Shall a man who in his younger days has written poetry, or what passed for it, continue to attempt it in his later years? Certainly, if it amuses or interests him, no one would object to his writing in verse as much as he likes. Whether he should continue to write for the public is another question. Poetry is a good deal a matter of heart-beats, and the circulation is more languid in the later period of life. The joints are less supple; the arteries are more or less "ossified." Something like these changes has taken place in the mind. It has lost the flexibility, the plastic docility, which it had in youth and early manhood, when the gristle had but just become hardened into bone. It is the nature of poetry to writhe itself along through the tangled growths of the vocabulary, as a snake winds through the grass, in sinuous, complex, unexpected curves, which crack every joint that is not supple as india-rubber.

I had a poem that I wanted to print just here. But after what I have this moment said, I hesitated, thinking that I might provoke the obvious remark that I exemplified the unfitness of which I had been speaking. I remembered the advice I had given to a poetical aspirant not long since, which I think deserves a paragraph to itself.

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My friend, I hope you will not write in verse. When you write in prose you say what you *mean*. When you write in rhyme you say what you *must*.

Should I send this poem to the publishers, or not?

"Some said, 'John, print it;' others said,
'Not so.'"

I did not ask "some" or "others." Perhaps I should have thought it best to keep my poem to myself and the few friends for whom it was written. All at once, my *daimōn* — that other Me over whom I button my waistcoat when I button it over my own person — put it into my head to look up the story of Madame Saqui. She was a famous *danseuse*, who danced Napoleon in and out, and several other dynasties besides. Her last appearance was at the age of seventy-six, which is rather late in life for the tight rope, one of her specialties. Jules Janin mummified her when she died in 1866, at the age of eighty. He spiced her up in his eulogy as if she had been the queen of a modern Pharaoh. His foamy and flowery rhetoric put me into such a state of good-nature that I said, I will print my poem, and let the critical Gil Blas handle it as he did the archbishop's sermon, — or would have done, if he had been a writer for the Salamanca Weekly.

It must be premised that a very beautiful loving cup was presented to me on my recent birthday, by eleven ladies of my acquaintance. This was the most costly and notable of all the many tributes I received, and for which in different poems I expressed my gratitude.

TO THE ELEVEN LADIES

WHO PRESENTED ME WITH A SILVER LOVING CUP ON THE TWENTY-NINTH OF AUGUST, M DCCC LXXXIX.

"Who gave this cup?" The secret thou wouldst steal
Its brimming flood forbids it to reveal:
No mortal's eye shall read it till he first
Cool the red throat of thirst.

If on the golden floor one draught remain,
Trust me, thy careful search will be in vain;
Not till the bowl is emptied shalt thou know
The names enrolled below.

Deeper than Truth lies buried in her well
Those modest names the graven letters spell
Hide from the sight; but wait, and thou shalt see
Who the good angels be

Whose bounty glistens in the beauteous gift
That friendly hands to loving lips shall lift:
Turn the fair goblet when its floor is dry, —
Their names shall meet thine eye.

Count thou their number on the beads of Heaven, —
Alas! the clustered Pleiads are but seven;
Nay, the nine sister Muses are too few, —
The Graces must add two.

"For whom this gift?" For one who all too long
Clings to his bough among the groves of song;
Autumn's last leaf, that spreads its faded wing
To greet a second spring.

Dear friends, kind friends, whate'er the cup may hold,
Bathing its burnished depths, will change to gold:
Its last bright drop let thirsty Mænads drain,
Its fragrance will remain.

Better love's perfume in the empty bowl
Than wine's nepenthe for the aching soul;
Sweeter that song than ever poet sung,
It makes an old heart young!

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

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RECENT AMERICAN FICTION.

We wonder if Mr. Crawford changed his mind when he came to write Sant' Ilario.[1] Certainly, we brought away from Saracinesca a pretty strong impression that he was clearing the ground for an historical novel, in which the house of Saracinesca was to play an important part in Italian politics and war; and we took up Sant' Ilario with the expectation of finding something more than a faintly sketched background of national life, while a few figures carried on their domestic drama in the foreground. Possibly, this slight disappointment has tinged our judgment of the book which Mr. Crawford has written. At any rate, we have an uneasy feeling that the proportions in which he first sketched his series have shrunken, and that instead of large movements of men and women the somewhat smaller figures of the conventional inhabitants of the world of fiction are playing their petty drama.

True, the central theme of the book cannot be called a mean one. The estrangement of a noble woman from a husband consumed by a passionate and horrible distrust, followed by the reconciliation of the pair, is, or may be under certain treatment, a great theme; and there are passages in this book which convince one that Mr. Crawford takes his hero and heroine very seriously. But the somewhat hard manner which characterizes Mr. Crawford's portraiture of men and women is rendered even more mechanical than usual by the reliance which he places, in Sant' Ilario, upon the machinery of fiction. In one of the first pages, the secondary hero of the story finds a small gold pin. He puts it in his pocket, but not more securely than the hardened novel-reader puts it away in his memory, in readiness for use at some future critical point in the narrative. This is but the first of a series of incidents on which the writer depends for building a plot against the happiness of Sant' Ilario and Corona. The reader is notified, at every step, of the process of entanglement, and he knows, therefore, that there is absolutely no basis in the reality of things for Sant' Ilario's suspicion of his wife's fidelity. If this were all, he might rest in cheerful confidence that the necessary disclosure would come at last, that some one of the carefully adjusted stones of this fancifully constructed prison of fate would fall out of place, and then that the whole ingenious fabric would come tumbling to the ground. This is what happens, and the novelist has his labor for his pains.

The essential weakness lies not so much in the flimsiness of the circumstantial web which enmeshes the characters as in the incredulity which possesses the reader regarding the power which these circumstances properly would have upon the mind of Sant' Ilario. A previous book has been devoted to an explication of the characters of the hero and heroine. The reader has made their acquaintance, as he thinks, yet he is obliged now to admit the presence of an element in Sant' Ilario's nature which disintegrates the previous conception of his character. Jealousy has its noble side, and Shakespeare and Salvini between them have shown that it is a most potent element in the fearful transmutation of a savage nature; but Sant' Ilario is no Othello, and, what is more to the point, there is no Iago in this book to arouse and inflame the sleeping intelligence. It becomes necessary to suppose this keen, fearless, and chivalrous Italian gentleman suddenly seized with a suspicion,

[1] *Sant' Ilario.* By F. Marion Crawford. London and New York: Macmillan & Co. 1889.

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on most trivial grounds, of a singularly high-bred, queenly, and Diana-like woman. It is a fatal artificiality of view, and the reader not only feels a cynical impatience with Sant' Ilario; he resents the whole scheme of the story which compels him to take part in so unworthy a means of displaying the torture of a man and his wife. He cannot help thinking: All this is waste energy; Sant' Ilario and Corona, in place of this miserable episode in their married life, might have been about some worthy business connected with the unification of Italy, and we could have had all the adventures of Gouache and Faustina and the futile machinations of Montevarchi to amuse us.

We are not finding fault with Mr. Crawford for using the good old-fashioned faculty of invention. It is one of the pleasures which he gives the reader that something constantly happens in his books, and one is not called on to watch a group of modern ladies and gentlemen merely fencing with words, turning all life into a modern Love's Labor Lost; and this book has plenty of action in it. We are merely asking that human nature shall have fair play, and a reasonable interpretation be given of the conduct of men and women, whose characters count for something. Indeed, while Mr. Crawford wrongs himself in doing violence to the hero of his book, he shows himself very clever in his rendering of some of the minor characters. San Giacinto, with his mixture of coarseness and sincerity, repelling one under ordinary circumstances, yet standing the test of a critical occasion, is capitally drawn; and so also is Meschini, though we would willingly be spared the excessive anatomizing of his experience after the murder; a few strong passages would have been more effective than the wearisome and dry detail of the symptoms of his case. The facility which Mr. Crawford shows in the manipulation of incident ought to relieve him from the necessity of analyzing character; that is the recourse of novelists who do not see their characters in action, and so are obliged to account for their behavior by a reference to their internal structure.

It is no wonder that Mr. Crawford avails himself of Italy in his stories. He is at home there, and, if his assertion is to be trusted, he knows the life and manners as other foreigners do not. Moreover, he intimates that the Italian character offers varieties which enlarge the scope of human mental and moral activity, as judged by the Anglo-Saxon. Mr. Astor, in his second novel,[1] either increases or diminishes his difficulties, as the reader may decide, by laying the scenes not merely in Italy, but in the Italy of the opening of the sixteenth century. There are many persons, English and American, who can test the accuracy of Mr. Crawford's pictures of life by a reference to their own experience in Italy; but here they have little advantage over the untraveled reader, especially if he has a historical sense. When asked to walk about among doges of Venice, Milanese nobles, French kings and cavaliers, we expect to part with all but the rudimentary experience of human nature, and to see characters very much as if they were in a museum of curiosities. We suspect that Mr. Astor himself has been more or less affected by this consideration in conceiving the figures of his tale. He has taken a few historic and semi-historic characters, and arranged them in a series of *tableaux vivants*, and he has contrived to bring together for decorative purposes a good deal of Italian bricabrac. The excellence of the work is seen in the detached scenes, not in the continuous narrative. In this latter respect, the book indeed shows an advance on the author's previous novel, Valentino; yet there is the

[1] *Sforza: a Story of Milan.* By William Waldorf Astor. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1889.

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same defect in both tales, by which the reader is left in doubt whether the author is trying to tell a story with an historic background, or is trying to place actual historic figures and scenes in such relation to each other that they shall disclose a drama of real life. The joints of the story are loose, and one passes from one scene or adventure to another without observing any real culmination. It is as if the author's historical knowledge were always getting the better of his art as a novelist. He makes use of a somewhat conventional trick in supplying a heroine, unknown either to hero or reader, by having an attendant of Sforza go through the book as a fencer, when in reality the personage is a girl in the disguise of a man. The reader, upon being apprised of this fact, goes back in his reading, and discovers a few facts which are elucidated by this disclosure; but they were not of much importance at the time, and after the girl is relieved of her masculine attire the author, who has thus cleverly avoided the bother of a heroine, apparently has very little use for her. He shuffles her and the hero out of the way, at the end of the book, with an amusingly faint and hurried pretense of passion and sentiment. If, as we have intimated, the reader will be content with isolated scenes, well set, he may extract a rational pleasure from the book; but he must be willing to have the several characters, as his interest is awakened in them, step aside, and reappear later without very close connection with their previous performances.

Of a somewhat other sort is a little historical romance,[1] which moves among less mighty names and on less classic ground, but somehow comes closer to human interest. With Mr. Astor we find ourselves curious as to the movements of his characters. They all belong to another period, another clime; they are playing for our entertainment, and we praise the skill with which their costumes are reproduced and the general accuracy of detail that is shown. With Mrs. Catherwood we witness an heroic deed set in the light of passionate love, and forget, while we are reading, to criticise or even to praise, for we live in the story. The distinction is one which goes to the bottom of things. It is not merely that in one case we have an intriguing Italian civilization, with the encounter of petty spirits, in the other a fresh, new-world experiment, with recourse to elemental activities of life; but the treatment in one case is superficial, in the other profound. In Sforza, the author has arranged scenes; in The Romance of Dollard, the author has imagined two or three persons, and they have wrought their drama. Mr. Astor, with his dexterous art, just pricks through the surface of things; Mrs. Catherwood, with her conception of what the human heart can do and can suffer, works from within outward, and her picture becomes vivid and full of color. But enough of this comparison, which is liable to be ungenerous. We wish only to emphasize our admiration for a writer who, when dealing with the past, is rather concerned with those eternal likenesses which abbreviate time than with the temporary dissimilarities which make us forget eternity. As Mrs. Catherwood says in her brief preface, "the phase is mediæval, is clothed in the garb of religious chivalry; but the spirit is a part of the universal man."

"The chief personages of the tale," says Mr. Parkman, in his corroborative preface, — "except always the heroine, — were actual men and women two and a quarter centuries ago, and Adam Dollard was no whit less a hero than he is represented by the writer; though it is true that as regards his position, his past career, and, above all, his love affairs, romance supplies some information which

[1] *The Romance of Dollard.* By Mary Hartwell Catherwood. New York: The Century Company. [1889.]

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history denies us. The brave Huron Annahotaha also is historical. Even Jouaneaux, the servant of the hospital nuns, was once a living man, whose curious story is faithfully set forth; and Sisters Brésoles, Maçé, and Maillet were genuine Sisters of the old Hôtel-Dieu at Montreal, with traits much like those assigned to them in the story."

The story revolves about the exploit of Adam Dollard, who with a small band of companions, reinforced by a few Hurons, took up a position at the foot of the rapids of the Long Saut, and withstood the great body of Iroquois who were moving down with the intent to sweep New France out of existence. The brave men lost their lives, but they saved New France, and for a long while after 1660 the little colony had no fear of savage raids. The exploit itself is matter of history, and is kept alive in the minds of Canadians. Time has scarcely dimmed the glory of the heroic deed, but it remained for our artist to add just that touch of human love which makes the man and his deed swim in an atmosphere of beauty.

The heroine, Claire Laval, is a woman of the French *noblesse*, who has come to Quebec with a hidden passion for Dollard. Neither the hero nor the reader is admitted to the secret of this act until, in the crisis of the great sacrifice of the Saut, the confession can be made without loss of maidenly dignity. The author has chosen this point with unerring rightness, but no emphasis is laid on it, for it is only one of the many significant features of this lovely romance. The reader feels from the outset the sweet passion of the heroine's nature, but the revelation of her strength of will and intensity of purpose is gradually made. At the risk of raising an incredulous smile, we assert that there is something Shakespearean in this figure of Claire Laval, and when we have said this we have told the reader that the portraiture is the work of a poet rather than of a novelist. This exquisite creation, with the old-world art and the new-world nature, has a delightful counterpoise in the Indian maiden Massawippa, in whom the pride of a savage is so refined by the love of a daughter that we see the two figures stepping side by side without for a moment confusing them, yet perceiving their profound community. Each, too, complements the other, to the heightening of the general effect. The scene in the chapel, where the two women lie side by side at the foot of the altar, has a stillness of power which creates for the reader an entire circumstance. We mean that he is drawn to look at this dark and at this fair woman so steadily that the very objects about them gradually become more visible to him in the quiet night.

It may be said of the whole book that the concentration of interest in the chief figures and their drama, which moves forward with an acceleration of strength, indicates a fine power in the writer. She is so dominated by her theme that every little incident falls into its place with a prevision of the final event, so that once he has embarked upon the narrative the reader is borne along the current with an undefined sense of something very noble in the air. The reserve of the book is remarkable, and scarcely less so the freedom of the minute touches by which the action is humanized and brought close to a homely feeling without arousing any sense of mere triviality. We are not absolutely sure that the singular and striking Abbé de Granville is essential to the story, but the incident created through the character certainly enriches the tale by adding the relief of a slight grotesqueness; but every other figure, even the most subordinate, breathes the breath of this pure and lofty romance. That Mrs. Catherwood has studied minutely the substratum of historical and scenic fact is clear; indeed, we could have spared her foot-notes, which are modestly impertinent; but

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after all, her success is due to her power of conceiving human life, her fidelity to the truth of that inner fact which is independent of time, place, and circumstance, yet becomes real to us when it is clothed by the imagination with its fitting exterior form.

Mr. Parkman touches a responsive chord when he concludes: "The realism of our time has its place and function; but an eternal analysis of the familiar and commonplace is cloying after a while, and one turns with relief and refreshment to such fare as that set before us in Mrs. Catherwood's animated story." We do not quote this as reflecting upon the art employed by Miss Woolson, for this writer, though closely occupied with the experience of men and women of her own day, has distinctly an adventurous spirit, and follows her heroes and heroines through the mazes of their minds only as some succession of incidents gives reason for such a pursuit. We have followed her writing with interest and pleasure heretofore, and our observations upon her art have been directed chiefly to what we may regard as due to an excess of literary conscience. Her latest book,[1] however, is a somewhat disturbing one. We do not find the best of Miss Woolson in it except in the portraiture of the minor characters and in one strong theme, which is indeed the central theme of the book, but so confused with other issues as to be less effective, we think, than if it had been allowed a simpler expression.

The story of Jupiter Lights is briefly as follows: Cicely Abercrombie, a little devil of a Southern girl, married John Bruce, a Northern soldier. He was madly in love with the girl, and carried her by storm after a brief siege. They had a child, and then Bruce died. In a few months the widow herself fell madly in love with a handsome, gay Southerner, Ferdinand Morrison, and married him with a willful perversity which was not in the least weakened when it turned out that Ferdie, as everybody in the book feels bound to call him, had an hereditary tendency to a mixture of insanity and delirium tremens. In one of his moments of aberration Ferdie struck Cicely, and slung little Jack out of his crib, breaking his arm. He then disappeared to the convenient remoteness of Valparaiso, to wait till the novelist wanted him for dark and dreadful purposes.

Not long after Ferdie had gone to South America, Eve Bruce, the sister of Ferdie's predecessor, arrived at Romney, the dilapidated home of the Abercrombies, on the coast of Georgia, with the intent of taking possession of Jack. She knew nothing of his early adventures with his step-father. She did not even know that he had a step-father, much less that Ferdie had gone, temporarily, out of sight. She was a willful young woman in her own right, who looked upon herself as ill used by this Southern girl who had stolen her brother, and she was drawn to Romney only by the hope of getting control of little Jack. She could not understand Cicely, — nobody can, — and found her sister-in-law even more of an enigma when she learned for the first time of Ferdie's behavior, and discovered that it seemed to intensify the wife's admiration and love.

It was now time, in the development of the novel, for Ferdie to reappear. He came. He was as handsome as he could be, but Eve, forewarned, discovered certain marks about the corners of his mouth which confirmed Cicely's tale. All went well for a time, but suddenly Cicely presented herself to Eve in the night, and advised her that the crisis had come. They dressed Jack and fled, the crazy Ferdie in full pursuit. Cicely with Jack succeeded in reaching a boat; Eve was behind, and Ferdie between her and his victims. She had a pistol, which she

[1] *Jupiter Lights.* By Constance Fenimore Woolson. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1889.

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fired, and saw the man fall. Cicely, meanwhile, had fainted in the bottom of the boat, and Eve, with the strength which terror imparts both in fiction and in real life, shoved the boat off, and rowed to a neighboring island. The fugitives made their way to Savannah, always with the fear of seeing Ferdie behind them, and thence fled to the shores of Lake Superior, to seek the protection of Paul Tennant, the half-brother and whole admirer of the reprobate Ferdie.

The moment Paul appears, the sagacious reader foresees that destiny has provided him for Eve. But Eve herself did not at first discover this, nor did Paul. Meanwhile, letters and dispatches kept the party informed regarding Ferdie's condition. He had been shot — so the word came — by two negroes, who had escaped, but his wound was healing. He grew better; then suddenly he died, and the whole party, without Paul, returned to Romney. Paul followed shortly after, insisting upon marrying Eve, who fled to avoid him. She took refuge finally in a religious house, and was about to take the veil, when Paul reached her with important information, broke through all the barriers which separated him from his love, "and took Eve in his arms."

This is, of course, but the dead shell of the story; the living animal is quite another matter. The real theme of the book may be stated succinctly as an aphorism: Woman's love is absolute abandonment of self. The illustration in Cicely's case is clear. She loved Ferdie with such blind devotion that though he were to slay her, yet would she trust him; it was only her other love for Jack and his little life that forbade her to be a sacrifice. The real torture is for Eve. It must be premised that the reader is not informed at the time that Eve shot Ferdie. He may surmise it, but for the purposes of the story it was necessary that for a long while Eve alone should know it. Until she reached Paul she did not know whether she had killed Ferdie or not. Then he began to recover, and her own spirits rose. When he died she was madly in love with Paul; in fact, she began to discover what Cicely's love for Ferdie meant. At last she told Paul of her act, as before she had told Cicely, and then fled. As we have seen, Paul pursued her. He loved her in spite of the fact that she had killed his brother. But Eve, with a woman's wit, divined surely that in time, if he married her, he would come to loathe her. She would not make him miserable, and so she left him again. The important news which Paul finally brought to her was that she did not kill Ferdie, after all. He recovered from the slight wound she had inflicted, and died from the effects of a debauch. She was therefore free to love and be loved.

Although the main theme of the book can be stated as above, the endless variations on the theme bring the reader to the point of distraction. What Cicely thinks of Eve when Cicely is in her senses and when she has brain fever; how the relations of the two women are affected by Eve's saving Jack from drowning; how Eve feels before she tells her crime, — her crime consisting in shooting a man who was dead sure to kill his wife and her child; how she feels after she has told it to Cicely and before she has told Paul; how she wavers between a fear of Cicely's telling Paul and a resolve to tell him herself, — all these and many other complications make up a network of emotional torture which may be exact enough for psychological purposes, but is very confusing to the reader of a piece of fiction. One is under the harrow from beginning to end, and the final sensation, when the author lets him know that all the heaped-up trouble has no actual basis of fact, is not so much relief that Eve can now have what she wants as irri-

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tation that characters and reader alike have all been suffering needless agony.

Miss Woolson's ingenuity does not fail her in this book, but it is put, we must think, to extreme tests. There is such a succession of narrow escapes, so many dreary attacks upon the comfort of all concerned, so constant a conspiracy against a sane, wholesome experience of life, that a sensitive mind awakes at last out of a sort of nightmare aggravated by mosquito bites. The relief is gained by the undeniable humor expended on the characters of Judge Abercrombie, Hollis, the several darkies, and above all on Mrs. Mile, the nurse, who is a genuine success. We fear that Miss Woolson's interest in casuistry and her ingenuity of invention are leading her farther and farther away from large pictures of human life into the windings and turnings of fictitious pathology. We may add that there are many passages in the book which read as if they were random notes jotted down by the novelist, and one comes to have a feeling that the author as well as the reader is exhausted from time to time with the effort to keep up with the half-crazy heroines.

The fashion of fiction changes, and there is a point in the transition when that which was accepted is now out of date, but not yet quaint. There are books, also, whose virtues are not always accepted at the time in their just proportions. We suspect that both the author and his readers regarded The New Priest,[1] when it appeared, as a contribution to semi-religious fiction; yet now, when we are just recovering from a pretty severe attack of literature of this order, the theological aspect of the book, earnest as it is, appeals to us less emphatically than the very artistic quality of certain features in it. A poet wrote this story, and the material most fit to his hand was the Newfoundland character, both as seen in nature and in men and women. The simple religious nature of the people, joined to a rugged, homely grasp of the soil, is presented with great force and beauty. There is a genuineness about this element in the book which remains as an impression in the reader's mind long after he has forgotten the discussions upon church questions or the rather tenuous plot. Yet when he thinks either of plot or of discussion, he remembers at once the piquant figure of Elnathan Bangs, surely one of the most skillfully drawn Yankee characters in our literature, and plainly belonging to the same family as his cousin, Hosea Biglow. The scene at the close of the book, when Mr. Bangs carries out his notion of a public meeting, resolutions and all, with the astonished Newfoundlanders unwittingly abetting him, is quite inimitable. The book is full of delightful touches, and there is a rare pleasure in store for one who has read it through conscientiously, — that of reading it again without a conscience.

THE GOVERNMENT OF SWITZERLAND.

THE mechanism and spirit of the institutions of Switzerland have not been hitherto much studied either in England or America. Our race visits the little republic by thousands every year; we climb the mountains and sail the lakes, fee the waiters and quarrel with the landlords; but we bring home very little knowledge of what is really the fair-

[1] *The New Priest in Conception Bay.* By ROBERT LOWELL. Boston: Roberts Brothers. 1889.

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est object in Switzerland: the government itself, with its deep, historical background; the political system, with all its range of light and shade, of hope and danger. On the principle *de minimis non curatur*, or some other, even the publicists have passed it by with scanty notice. Students of other institutions have long deplored this neglect, which has left the smallest free commonwealth of Europe almost unknown in the oldest, and the oldest federal republic in the world unknown to the greatest; which amounts almost to contempt for a very valuable stock of political experience. But some reparation for the past is now made. By a curious coincidence there have just appeared two works, strikingly alike in general scope and method, one English and one American, on the system of government in the Alpine republic, its history and principles, its virtues and vices.[1]

It would probably be wrong to ascribe this sudden bounty to remorse or repentance alone; there are real reasons why Swiss institutions and affairs should have just now a peculiar interest, and even excite an unusual sympathy. One of these is the state of international relations in Europe. Everybody knows that the times are not favorable to small states which stand in the way of the arms, or the ambition, or the greed of great ones, and there is an uneasy feeling among the best observers that the day is not far remote when Switzerland will have to fight for her existence. She has snubbed Bismarck, and Bismarck never forgives an injury. Her territory offers a convenient route for the rival armies when the war of *revanche* begins; and it has lately been argued with no little cogency in a foreign periodical that France, at least, will not hesitate to brush away the neutrality of the republic, in spite of all the guaranties, as the Allies did in 1814. Graver apprehensions are even heard that the Triple Alliance may need the territory of the republic to round off frontiers and adjust accounts in the next European settlement. These fears may be premature or exaggerated, but they exist, and they explain in part the new interest in the little state. Another explanation, which holds good at least for England, is found in the Irish problem and the colonial problem. These both involve schemes for changing the existing relation between members of a great empire; and though one of them has not got beyond the stage of informal discussion, both alike invite and almost require the comparative study of the institutions of other countries. In the projects which have been submitted the federal system of government plays a large part. The United States naturally have the honor of furnishing the greatest amount of material in the arguments for and against this system; but the Swiss Confederation yields an example which clearly fits the most acute of the two British problems, — the problem of uniting peoples of different race and religion under one common and harmonious government. Evidently, the Act of Union has failed to do this in the case of England and Ireland, as the old system failed before the Union. In Switzerland, however, it has been done, — not, indeed, without frictions, not without armed collisions, and not until after many trials and experiments; but it has been done, and on the whole successfully. It is natural, therefore, for Mr. Dicey and Mr. Bryce to refer frequently to Switzerland for illustrations, not only of the federal system in itself, but also of the federal system as applied to a problem such as making the Roman Catholic Irish and the Protestant Eng-

[1] *The Swiss Confederation.* By Sir F. O. Adams and C. D. Cunningham. London: Macmillan & Co. 1889.

The Federal Government of Switzerland. An Essay on the Constitution. By Bernard Moses, Ph. D., Professor in the University of California. Oakland: Pacific Press Publishing Company. 1889.

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lish live together in peace; and every Englishman who honestly desires the best solution must be drawn to the same comparative method.

The authors of the two works on Switzerland have therefore rendered an opportune service. That works on the same subject and so much alike in many respects should appear at the same time is, as we have said, a noteworthy coincidence. But though they are very much alike, there is one general difference between them. The English authors aim to give a detailed picture of Swiss institutions, local as well as national, religious, educational, and military as well as political; and to show not only their structure, but also their operation. The American professor adopts narrower and more precise limits. His book is more properly a treatise on the federal system of government as organized in Switzerland; it is critical as well as descriptive; and reversing the familiar rule that things should be explained by other things better known, he draws freely for illustrations upon the unexplored constitutions of Mexico and other republics of Central and South America. Both works, it may be added, give a brief sketch of the rise of the Swiss governments, but neither prints the text of the existing constitution.

Americans are, perhaps, interested mainly in the points of difference between Swiss federalism and their own, or, to be a little more precise, in the different devices by which the two systems meet the problems peculiar to federalism, as distinguished from what publicists call the "unitarian" governments. One of these concerns the interpretation of the fundamental pact, or articles, or constitution, on which the union rests. With us this function is performed, of course, in the last resort by the Supreme Court; and there is, perhaps, no other part of our system which has extorted more admiration from foreign critics than this exalted prerogative of the judiciary. But when we turn to the federal tribunal of Switzerland, we find a body of much more limited powers and far less dignity. The judges are elected by the legislature: their term of office is only six years; their decisions are enforced by the executive; and they have no power to pass upon the constitutionality of any act of federal legislation, or indeed upon the legality of any measure of the federal authorities. Even the extent of the court's jurisdiction seems to be determined, in part at least, by the laws rather than by the constitution, and is thus subject to change at any time. In short, this tribunal is nearly a mere servant of other organs of the government, and not, like our own Supreme Court, a mediator between them, or even a superior above them.

If now the Swiss court loses by comparison with the American, it might seem that the Swiss legislature, the Federal Assembly, must gain. It practically creates the court, largely fixes its sphere of action, and its own acts are not subject to judicial revision. But this is not all. It elects in the same way the members of the federal executive; and although it cannot exactly turn them out during their term of office, it enjoys such extensive power of supervision and control over their acts, and in fact exercises so large a part of what we should call the executive discretion, that it can, practically, have very little reason for desiring to turn them out. The pardoning power, for instance, belongs to it, and it can in a measure initiate foreign policies. If we stopped here, then, we might naturally call Switzerland a parliamentary republic, as the United Provinces were in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. We might even class the Federal Assembly with the sovereign Parliament of England.

Yet such a comparison would be grossly misleading. If the Swiss legislature stands above the executive and the judiciary, there is another power which

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stands, not only in the final theory, but even in the daily practice of the constitution, above the legislature. This power is, of course, the people themselves. It is well known that students of Austin have some real or affected difficulty in locating the seat of sovereignty in this country. Perhaps Mr. Dicey is right in suggesting that it lies with that body or that majority, formed by three fourths of the States, which has the power to amend the constitution. But, as Mr. Moses observes, no such doubt can arise in the case of Switzerland. For in Switzerland not only proposed changes in the constitution, but, on the demand of thirty thousand citizens or eight cantons, any act or resolution of a general nature passed by the Federal Assembly, must be submitted to the popular vote. This is the famous Swiss Referendum, and the first thing to be said of it is that it shows clearly where the seat of sovereignty is located. The chief disagreement of our authors (and it is a somewhat serious disagreement) is in regard to what may be called the status of the institution. Sir F. O. Adams describes it as having overcome nearly all opposition, and as having now taken its place in the settled polity of the state; but Professor Moses thinks it is still an experiment, about which the Swiss people are by no means unanimous. Either view must, from the nature of things, be largely conjectural. The facts given in the English work seem, however, to show an increasing frequency in the use of the federal Referendum. Thus in 1884, ten years after the extension of the system to ordinary laws, four acts were submitted and rejected, one of them being for the establishment of a secretaryship to the Swiss legation at Washington, at a salary of two thousand dollars.

Such trivial cases bring the institution into close analogy to our township or village system, where the people vote on a proposition to buy a fire-engine or to build a bridge. But in its larger significance it shows us the substitution of pure for representative democracy; and this we regard as a distinct step backward. It used to be one of the commonplaces of political philosophy that republics were possible only in small states. It is a later commonplace that this idea prevailed only because the principle of representation was unknown, and a republic meant a state in which the people administered their own affairs directly, in general assemblies of the freemen. Switzerland still has these assemblies in the Landsgemeinden of some of her cantons, and we have them in our New England town-meetings, which Tocqueville found so instructive, and which Mr. Freeman traces back to the Germans of Tacitus. But the town-meetings, whatever may be said of the Landsgemeinden, are now purely local gatherings. In every larger sphere, the theory of our institutions assumes that, ordinarily, the people speak and act through their representatives, as was also the case in Switzerland until 1874; and unless that theory is false, unless the principle of representation is only a makeshift, it is not a healthy sign that the fashion seems to set just now toward the restoration of pure democracy on a large scale in the form of devices like the plébiscite, the referendum, and the "reference to the people." A real appeal to the people exists in every representative government whenever there is a general election for the legislature. Our own institutions, state as well as national, also have special provision for the case of changes in the organic law. But as Burke observed, it is not wise to make the medicine of the constitution its daily food; and a study of Swiss institutions, which, on account of the difference of scale, may not yield much instruction for us, may nevertheless in this particular case be of service by calling attention to certain unfortunate parallels which our own recent tendencies exhibit.

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To the Referendum corresponds, in Switzerland, the Initiative. It works in precisely the opposite direction, but it is open to the same theoretical objection, namely: that it corrupts the representative principle by the intrusion — that is, the introduction at the wrong time and place — of pure, or at least direct democracy. Fifty thousand Swiss citizens can, at any time, set the machinery of constitutional revision in motion. On the petition of this number, the Federal Assembly is bound to submit the desirability of revision to the popular vote; and should the majority be in the affirmative, the Assembly is dissolved, and a new one chosen, whose duty it is to prepare and submit articles of revision, or, as we should say, amendments. To become valid these must be approved by a majority of the people and a majority of the cantons. The system, though modeled upon one of the alternative methods by which amendments to our own federal constitution may be proposed, thus contains one significant modification of it: the people appear in their national character, and independent of state lines. The same holds true of the ratification of amendments. Of course the Federal Assembly may itself propose amendments, as may Congress, without any demand from the people. A sort of Initiative also exists under which the authorities of any canton can submit legislative propositions to the Federal Assembly, which is bound to consider them. But the Initiative seems not yet to have taken root so firmly as the Referendum. Sir F. O. Adams says the institution is still in its infancy, and he suggests, reasonably enough, that there "is great difficulty in embodying this right in a form at once simple and efficacious." It cannot be said that either he or Professor Moses gives as full an account of the operation of the Referendum and the Initiative — for foreigners the most interesting features of the Swiss system — as might be desirable. An author has, however, the right to choose his own subject; and it is doubtful, in spite of daily examples, whether criticism ought to attack Smith, who writes a history of Greek art, because he did not, like Brown, confine himself to a history of Greek sculpture.

The federal constitution of Switzerland guarantees, in the usual continental form, nearly every right precious to humanity in the nineteenth century. It guarantees the freedom of the press, freedom of religion, freedom of public meeting, the "liberty and rights of the people," the "constitutional rights of the citizens," the territory of the cantons, their sovereignty, and their constitutions. But the value of such guaranties depends on the resources for enforcing them, and to find and use adequate resources is one of the knotty problems in every federal government. Now the federal executive in Switzerland rebukes, coerces, and punishes offending cantons in a way unknown to our institutions. The cantonal constitutions need the federal guaranty, which is accorded only on certain conditions; and it seems that an amendment to any of these constitutions becomes valid only when ratified by the central authorities, no concrete case being necessary, as with us, to test it. In a word, the Swiss procedure for assuring the supremacy of the federal constitution is political, ours judicial. The former is in harmony with Continental methods, and of course suits the Swiss themselves, or they would not have it. But Americans may be pardoned for preferring to have such conflicts settled by the orderly procedure of the courts of law.

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EDWARD FITZGERALD.

EDWARD FITZGERALD gave a new classic to English literature in his translation of Omar Khayyám. His letters [1] may prove to have, in their own sphere, an interest not less enduring. They comprise a lifelong correspondence upon matters which will continue to engage the minds of men, and these are treated from a unique personal point of view. Mr. Fitzgerald advanced but one claim to be considered by his friends. He was, he said, a man of taste, whether in poetry, art, or music; he brought to his subject the touch-stone of that criticism which depends rather on feeling than on reason; he did not care to ask the why and wherefore of his judgment, and in those cases in which he found himself dull to masterpieces approved by other highly cultivated minds he was merely nonplused at his incapacity to appreciate. He was, however, gifted with a rare degree of independence and also of candor, which permitted him to hold and express views of literature with admirable sincerity, so that he does not offend even when he departs most widely from popular opinions. He disparages Tennyson with the freedom of a friend, but other modern poetry meets with such scanty consideration that the editor does not name the unfortunate authors of whom severe remarks are made. He cannot take to Hawthorne, though he acknowledges him to be the most distinct genius which America has produced. He has a very incomplete faith in Carlyle; with the best disposition to admire him and with some sympathy, he does not finally pass muster. His praise of Thackeray, though at the last ungrudging, strikes one as tardy. Spedding's toil over Bacon is the butt of his humor. So one might continue the long list. Perhaps it is as well to admit at once that he was a man of prejudice as well as of taste.

The root of the matter is that he was out of sympathy with the modern age. It was not for nothing that he found his favorite reading in the classics and in Boccaccio, Cervantes, and Scott. He was not an idealist; imagination and passion were both lacking in him; he was attached to life as it presents itself to the eye, — the passing spectacle, with humor and pathos met at random, with no sentiment except of the natural feelings. He was a true lover of poetry, but there was quite enough in old English verse to satisfy him. So far as our own time is concerned, he represents that discontent with the Victorian literature which is interesting because it is rare. Fortunately, he did not confine himself to his dislikes, but wrote of what he enjoyed. A good part of this was in Spanish and Persian, and his appreciation was so great that, by the aid of a talent for writing which he could not successfully resist, he re-worked from these sources those translations by which his place in literature is determined. It is well enough known what liberties he took with his text. What his success was will be variously estimated. It cannot be maintained that his Calderon ever would hold its own as an English classic for its own sake, as undoubtedly his Omar must. The other Persian translations will be favorites with a few. The Greek plays, which he rendered in the same way, do not represent the originals either in kind or in power; and judged as English dramas, they are rather curious than excellent. It is singular to observe that his literary faculty concerned itself with poetical philosophy

[1] *Letters and Literary Remains of Edward Fitzgerald.* Edited by WILLIAM ALDIS WRIGHT. 3 vols. New York: Macmillan & Co. 1889.

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most successfully, while his critical taste declared itself for dramatic realism.

It is, however, neither by his opinions nor by his works that he is most attractive. The charm which clothes his memory is that of the English country life which he led in the open air of nature, with hearty liking for rustic character, with books, pictures, and music to refine his leisure, and with ties of affection and friendship with great Englishmen of his time. It would not be difficult to draw his portrait at the different stages of youth and age, to make much of his eccentricities, to show how thoroughly insular he was, and exhibit the Celtic sensibility that went along with his English perversities and gave unusual warmth to his humane temperament and a touch of tenderness to his expression. The friends he loved best did not care to write letters to him, but they valued his heart; to those with whom he associated most constantly he seems to have given more than he received: and from these and like considerations, which attention forces only more painfully upon the mind, there arises something pathetic in the man's life, which is saddening. The outlook on literature, art, and music, and especially the unfailing delight in natural beauty, are a relief to the loneliness, and what we are constrained to call the littlenesses, of his existence. He was himself cheerful, to all appearance, and made the round of the years with much satisfaction in his enjoyments; perhaps he prided himself, half unconsciously, on his content with trifling pleasures; at all events, he loved his own, and, like an Englishman, was superior to all the world beside.

A nature so simple and a fortune so uneventful do not require many phrases to describe them, but in the writer's expression of himself and description of his surroundings there is a rich variety. He had command of a remarkably pure style. From the literary point of view, the style is really the one quality in which these letters excel. Clear, rapid, and entirely without pretense, yet with a certain distinction in the utterance and sense of selection in the words, with an abundant natural flow and plenty of humor and even a dash of wit, the writer goes on to the end of his paper in a vein of which one never tires; and his matter is worthy of so ready a tongue. Whether it is some blowing breeze on the buttercups, or the blare of Handel's trumpets, or Constable laying the old Cremona down on the sunshiny grass, or the *nequiaquam* of Lucretius, or the country preacher in his pulpit making the Crucifixion real to country hearers, or his own fishermen out on the North Sea who trouble his mind with thoughts of their danger, or what-not of a thousand topics, there is always something on the various pages which one is glad to have read, and to have come in touch with so fine a mind in the reading; and not with him only, but also with Tennyson, who was almost from college days Mr. Fitzgerald's friend; with Thackeray, who valued him second to none in affectionate remembrance; and with Spedding, at whom these two aimed their good-humored fun, though they respected him none the less for that. Others, too, in more humble stations, add variety to the characters, and increase the human interest which enlivens and relieves the whole.

A more entertaining volume, one that brings the mind into contact with what refines and elevates it with the sense of the higher interests of culture, and at the same time affords companionship with a simple and strong nature in its daily life, has not been added to the shelves of pure literature in many a year. Indeed, it stands by itself, and possesses an originality, a flavor, and character of its own, which those who hereafter examine the Victorian time will not willingly spare. Mr. Fitzgerald himself occupies a peculiarly distinct position as the translator of Omar, which must continue to draw

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attention; as a member of the Tennyson group of literary friends, from whom delightful glimpses of their comradeship are to be obtained, he appeals to the never-dying curiosity of men in regard to the private life of genius; as a man who seems to have avoided notice by choice in an age when to get into the public view is the object of such universal effort, he stimulates the desire to know him. On these several accounts his memoir was sure to be sought; and now that, on its appearance, it exhibits such rare qualities that its greatest value proves to be intrinsic, we have reason to anticipate for its author the great prize of a slowly matured fame, like that of a half dozen other English gentlemen whose distinction in literature came without self-seeking. He wins, after death, a place in English letters equal to the good fortunes of his friendships in early life, among, if not beside, his old comrades; and, notwithstanding their neighborhood, his life will be valued for itself, as an expression of the old English virtues of "high thinking and plain living."

FRENCH AND ENGLISH.

MR. HAMERTON'S comparative study[1] of the French and English nations has been so recently before our readers that, although the collected papers are fuller in matter and more orderly in arrangement, there is little occasion for such criticism as the volume would otherwise deserve. Native opinion respecting foreign countries usually abounds in ignorance and prejudice, and this characteristic is not confined to the uneducated classes; even as between England and America the mistakes made by leading journals and public men often seem surprising; in the case of the French and the English, in which kindred institutions and the same blood do not help to a mutual understanding, greater misapprehension is to be expected. It is owing to this unflattering cause, doubtless, that Mr. Hamerton, though plainly addressing the educated class, seems to be writing for very uninformed or very dull persons; but when he is able to quote both French and English writers in striking illustration of their ignorance or rashness in judgment, among whom Mr. Arnold figures conspicuously, he is certainly to be pardoned for thinking that the reader needs to be set right upon all points. It is characteristic, too, of one who resides much in a foreign country to assume that his acquaintance with it is exceptional. Mr. Marion Crawford has lately informed us that travelers of all nations in Italy have failed to understand the Italian character, and he does not make any exception to this sweeping judgment from Montaigne down; he proceeds to give a true account from his own observation. Mr. Hamerton is neither so naive as to say nor so fatuous as to believe this of himself; but without discrediting other trained observers, he relies implicitly on his own eyes and ears. But if he writes as if he knew all and the reader nothing, it is not long before the latter finds that the author is justified by his works: the reader's mind is being richly informed, his vague impressions are made clear and distinct, his views enlightened, by each new chapter; he is soon content to be a pupil in such a school.

Mr. Hamerton, in several passages,

[1] *French and English.* A Comparison. By PHILIP GILBERT HAMERTON. Boston: Roberts Brothers. 1889.

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seems to regret the temperate, open, and colorless style which he feels it necessary to employ. He complains that in literature "justice is not a very convenient or acceptable quality," and he even asserts generally that "great writers are not just." We are not concerned with the truth of the remark, but it is certainly this quality which constitutes the excellence of an observer of a foreign people; if he have it not, his other virtues encounter a more fatal defect than that of commonplaceness, which Mr. Hamerton assigns to the just writer. Justice, at all events, is the distinction of this volume which makes it both attractive to the mind and instructive of the truth. Neither do we find that the style suffers from the exactness of thought and expression at which the author aims. It pleases, as refined talk pleases, by the limit of its modulations; it is agreeable for a long time, where greater brilliancy, force, or fervor would tire attention; to a man of intelligent curiosity the matter itself is sufficient entertainment, and, as is the case with Mr. Hamerton's writing in general, which is much esteemed among us, dullness is the last thing one expects in the pages. So far, therefore, from sympathizing with the author in his complaint that justice is an injury to style, it is more to our taste to assure him that he need be in no fear upon that score; indeed, in making the remark, which is a sign of impatience by which his work is not often disturbed, he seems to us to descend to a lower standard of taste as well as of intelligence than that to which he strives at other times to accustom us. In this disquisition on comparative traits, justice holds perhaps a more constant influence than in his other works; but there is the same charm of the alert and suggestive mind, of orderly and simple thinking, of good taste, that characterize his books, and by them, as always, he interests the intelligence to which he constantly directs his main appeal.

It is impossible to read this mass of detailed information, well articulated as it is and comprehensively arranged, without involuntarily speculating upon the future of two societies in which there are so many active principles of change. France is naturally the more interesting nation. The salient feature of its social condition is the isolation of the aristocratic class not only in position, but in feeling. To an outsider there seems to be a lack of patriotism in the conduct of French parties in opposition; political rivalry exceeds the limits which it ought to observe in a healthy state, because the national sentiment is relatively weak in comparison with party loyalty; and one explanation of this is that the aristocracy is irreconcilable. The description given by Mr. Hamerton of the position of a French gentleman of good blood is most depressing: he is a man without a career; trade is impossible, and the profession of art or letters almost equally closed; public office is looked on as a post of treason to his caste; the church does not attract him; the court does not exist; the army and navy are crowded with plebeian ability, into competition with which he would be forced. There is nothing for it, limited as his means usually are, but idleness. The well-known phrases by which Mr. Arnold characterized the aristocracy of England apply to the country families in France with equal force; and, in fact, Mr. Hamerton grows almost more severe in pushing to an extreme his definition of the landed aristocrat by analogy with the traits of savage life. Apart from their character, however, the withdrawal of this class from the modern life of the nation is one of the great social conditions of the time in France, which the historian must always include in his survey of her development under democracy. It is an interesting question to ask whether this class will be absorbed, or must perish by its transformation and displacement jointly

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by the new wealth of the plutocracy; at present its only importance historically is its obstructiveness and recklessness in politics. Mr. Hamerton suggests the query, in connection with this subject, whether the English aristocracy will succeed in holding that pliable quality which has made it so convenient an institution for the change from monarchy to democracy in the last two centuries, or whether it will also find the measures and the persons of the popular party so repugnant to its own traditions and tastes as to alienate it from the body politic. It would appear that the changes in the political life of France, which have been the scorn of Englishmen in this century, are coming to such a degree of repose as to promise a fairly stable order, while similar conditions now threaten the stability of England. France, in his judgment, has crowded into a century what England has taken two centuries to accomplish only in part; and so it may be the lot of the former to look on in the peace of a settled arrangement while the latter passes through the dangers of the last period of popular reform. This would be a strange turning of the tables.

The general changes in the French character that apparently make for progress are easily recognizable. Foremost among them is the extinction of the spirit of boastfulness which resulted from the Napoleonic idea. France is not a peaceful nation in the same sense as America, since war always lies upon the eastern frontier; nevertheless, the fact that democracy is a policy of peace is sufficiently indicated under the republic. Mr. Hamerton ascribes this change to the fact that the army is the armed people, and that a parliamentary vote for war means, not the policy of a cabinet, but a national willingness or desire for sacrifice of life and treasure. There is less likelihood of war when the people who are to do the fighting and spending themselves decide on its necessity. The disinclination for war is illustrated negatively by the increasing enthusiasm for the triumph of peace in great engineering or industrial movements, and by the enlightened interest of the public in those scientific achievements which help to civilize the country. This also characterizes a democratic government, in which the welfare of the people is naturally the most absorbing interest. The conservatism of the democratic idea, besides, seems to be making itself apparent. The most significant sign of the times, however, is the temper of the younger men in the nation which is described as "coolness," — that coolness which is the sign of possession of the object striven for, and of the sense that the question of its preservation is the main question. The more constant and keen perception of the difficulties in the working of the desired government, now that it has become a reality, is proof of political growth in power as well as of advance in institutions. From these and other considerations, Mr. Hamerton believes that France has definitely accepted parliamentary democracy, and is beginning to enjoy its permanent influences.

These general matters on which Mr. Hamerton brings much of his observation to bear are probably most full of useful instruction. The questions of custom, virtue, refinement, and the like are more individual, and therefore statements with respect to them are apt to be misleading or incomplete. Paris and London may be compared, but provincial France and provincial England are harder to treat. as the author in his chapter upon Variety states most forcibly. It is necessary to take the highest developed type of the nation at large in each case, and this is what is meant by the English and French in the conversation of educated people. The French peasant and the Lancashire workman can be compared only with great crudity, and the country districts, as a whole, hardly at all. It is true

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that Mr. Hamerton has not given a complete account of either nation; but what he set out to do he has accomplished excellently. He has informed the minds of educated readers on both sides of the Channel upon those traits of their neighbors about which they indulged illusion or were grossly deceived by appearances, and he has set two modes of life and thought on a grand scale side by side in such a way as to illustrate the differences between them, especially when the defects or excellences of either seemed useful for the other's instruction. It is a most friendly service.

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB.

A Sense of the Ridiculous.

I HAVE often wondered — being an outsider in such matters — how it is that poets of genuine imaginative powers ever allow themselves to drop into pure bathos. I have vainly tried to explain to myself how Bryant, for example, happened to make his Hunter of the West pause on the hillside and look back at — what do you suppose?

"The dwelling of his *Genevieve*"!

The idea of a rough Western hunter having a wife named "Genevieve" is, as our advocates of elevator-boy diction would say, a little too thin. What mood of mind could have led the author of Thanatopsis into such incongruity? And where was his careful and sedate Muse when, in the poem called The Burial Place, he described flowers as being

"the forms and hues
Of *vegetable beauty*"?

Though Tennyson in his more recent editions has excluded The Skipping Rope, what phenomenal lapse of poetic instinct was it that left it possible for him to write that silly lyric? I hold that a sense of humor is an indispensable thing to the mental equipment of a serious poet. If Wordsworth had possessed this sense, he would have spared us many and many a page of puerility. If Matthew Arnold had had it, he never would have begun one of his fine sonnets with

"That son of Italy who tried to blow."

In the next line we get "the trump of sacred song," but it is too late. The mischief is done. Giacopone di Todi, ere Dante came, attempted to blow the trump of sacred song, which is all very well; but in an Index of First Lines the incomplete statement is comical, and no poet with any levity in him whatever would have allowed so absurd a verse to stand. Arnold had wit of a certain kind, but no humor. The lack of it was a serious limitation to him, both as poet and essayist. The good and bad influence of Wordsworth is very evident in several of Arnold's earlier poems. Wordsworth's simplicity sowed a dreadful seed in English poetry. Flowers from this seed crop out here and there in most unexpected places. I have little doubt of his responsibility for the second line of this couplet in the late Aubrey De Vere's tragedy, Mary Tudor, — a dramatic poem, in which there are scenes of undeniable dignity: —

"She rises from the sea of her great trouble,
Like a pure infant glowing from the bath"!

When I reach Browning, my theory touching the value of a perception of the ridiculous collapses. His keen eye in that direction is of no service to him; for Browning, to whom nearly all things have been given, has a very strong sense of humor, but not the sense to use it

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as a safeguard, and he must often be vastly amused with himself. Surely he was unable to keep his countenance when, in the epilogue to his Parleyings with Certain People, he penned that remarkable line, —

"The barrel of blasphemy broached once, who bungs?"

Yes, he must have enjoyed it.

Whether this great poet occasionally laughs in his sleeve at a confiding public is a question commended to the smileless consideration of Browning Clubs at large.

A Forgotten Immortal. — At the December meeting of the Contributors' Club, the writer had the honor to submit to his fellow-contributors, and to the intelligent and select audience who attend its reunions, a few French inscriptions which he had Englished, — if he may use a phrase contemporary with the inscriptions themselves. This month, let us look at an English inscription of the next century, the eighteenth, — that roomy, gossiping, candle-burning age, when people were more human than in the seventeen hundreds, and a great deal more simple and amusing than they are in the present year of grace.

I am not aware if many people know the city of Rennes; nor is there in that well-built French town much to know. But there is a good Musée, and in making a cautious progress through its overwaxed halls, I came, in a corner of a corridor, upon a collection of English mezzotints, — George III., and some members of the Royal Family, one or two beauties of the day, and finally a full-length portrait of a languid-looking person reclining on a settee and half leaning on a table, upon which a vase, papers, and a book of prints were carefully arranged in artistic disorder. This personage had upon her head a turban, and wore a flowing dress and a scarf, and behind her there was the inevitable fluted column with its attendant curtain. It would be a curious and interesting study to note the rise and fall of the pillar, the curtain, and the looped cord with its ample tassel, in English portrait-painting.

Beneath this picture (which was from an original painting by no less admirable a person than Angelica Kauffmann, and was engraved by Watson, who did so many clever mezzotints) was its title, — "Lady Bingham;" and the prodigies of artistic skill performed by Lady Bingham were celebrated in a verse in a small, stiff handwriting (which, alas, I have to quote from memory), signed "Hor. Walpole." Any one who knows Walpole's correspondence will hardly remember his slight allusions to her, and perhaps it will be amusing to hear something about this forgotten immortal, before we see his lines.

Margaret, Lady Bingham was the daughter and heiress of a Devonshire gentleman bearing the classically British name of John Smith, and in 1760 she exchanged her honest patronymic for that of Bingham, having married Sir Charles Bingham, a baronet, who some sixteen years later was created Baron Lucan, and Earl of Lucan in 1795. Now Lady Lucan discovered (as she would have said in a sense not at all incorrect) a very pretty taste for painting. Horace Walpole, who was always trying to discover (in our modern sense) things of every description, one day discovered *her;* and from that time an occasional sentence in his letters shows her progress in painting, and in another fine art, — that of getting on in the world. He seems to have met her about 1773, since in a letter to Lady Ossory, in that year, he speaks of an invitation to dine with her at Hampton Court, and a few days after alludes to her as "my new friend, Lady Bingham." Later, writing from Strawberry Hill, he says: "Lady Bingham is, I assure you, another miracle. She began painting in miniature within these two years. I have this summer lent her several of my finest heads; in five

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days she copied them, and so amazingly well that she has excelled a charming head of Lord Falkland by Hoskins. She allows me to point out her faults, and if her impetuosity will allow her patience to reflect and study she will certainly very soon equal anything that ever was done in water-colors." Walpole seems henceforth to have been an *habitué* of Lady Bingham's drawing-room, and it was, no doubt, after some especially clever copy of a favorite miniature that he wrote the inscription on the mezzotint which somehow found its way to the gallery at Rennes. Here it is: —

Without a Rival long on Painting's Throne
Urbino's modest Artist sat alone.
At last a British Fair's unerring eyes
In five short Moons contests the glorious Prise.
Raphael by Genius nurs'd, by Labour gained it.
Bingham but saw Perfection — and attained it!

And Lady Bingham very probably took this tribute in perfect good faith, although it is hard to believe that Walpole did not put into it as much sugar as he thought her ladyship would stand.

His next mention of her is in the summer of 1776, when he says: "The Binghams are incog. at Paris; their letters of recommendation announced them as my Lord and Lady Lucan; and the patents are still wind-bound." The patents, I suppose, were those for the advancement of Sir Charles to the title of Baron Lucan. A few days later, Walpole tells Lady Ossory in a "3rd P. S." that "they are so amazed and charmed at Paris with Lady Bingham's miniatures that the Duke of Orleans has given her a room at the Palais Royal to copy which of his pictures she pleases." Apparently their stay in Paris was a great social success. "I cannot answer your ladyship's question" (writes our excellent Horace to Lady Ossory in August) "from any Parisian authority, for my dear old woman (Madame du Deffand), who does not trouble her head about the court, seldom tells me anything but what relates to her own circle. I have heard here of the favor of my Lady Lucan, and, having the same curiosity as your ladyship, have inquired, but the answer is not come. . . . If Lady Lucan has made such a conquest by her painting, I think I, who was her master, ought at least to be a minister. But I doubt my fate will resemble me to some prince, I forget whom, whose tomb they show at Westminster Abbey, who was son, brother, uncle, and father of kings, but never was king himself."

Whether or no Walpole was a little nettled at the attentions showered on his whilom *protégé*, I know not. Rochefoucauld, in one of his bitter half-truths, tells us that there is always something in the misfortunes of our dearest acquaintances which is not altogether displeasing to us, and perhaps the reverse of this sentiment is also true. A writer of a very different class, and of our own day, says, "I call a man a perfect Christian who can always forgive his friends;" and Walpole was not a perfect Christian, and therefore writes to Sir Horace Mann a few months later: —

"Make many compliments, pray, for me to the house of Lucan, but between you and me, I am not at all delighted with their intending to bring me a present. I do not love presents, and much less from anybody but my dear friends. That family and I are upon very civil terms; our acquaintance is of modern date, and rather waned than improved. Lady Lucan has an astonishing genius for copying whatever she sees. The pictures I lent her from my collection, and some advice I gave her, certainly brought her talent to marvelous perfection in five months; for before, she painted in crayons, and as ill as any fine lady in England. She models in wax, and has something of a turn towards poetry; but her prodigious vivacity makes her too volatile in everything, and my lord follows wherever she leads. This is only for your private ear. I desire to remain as well as I am with them; but

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we shall never be more intimate than we are."

As time went on, Lady Lucan seems to have become rather of a blue-stocking. She "went in" for being musical as well as artistic. Walpole says he was terribly bored by assisting at a sacred concert at her house. "I was last night at Lady Lucan's," he writes, "to hear the Misses Bingham sing Jomelli's Miserere, set for two voices. . . . The service lasted near three hours, and was so dull instead of pathetic that I was rejoiced when it was over." This was in 1779.

The next year Lady Lucan's daughter became engaged to Lord Althorp, and Walpole made some more verses. "Having nothing better to offer as a New Year's gift," he writes to Lady Ossory (on January 2d), "I shall add a Nuptial Ode that I made for Lady Lucan." That the ode was not too elaborate may be inferred from its last verse, — quite enough, — which runs: —

> Your best wishes bring 'em,
> Your best roses fling 'em,
> O'er the hammock where Bingham
> And Althorp shall swing 'em, —
> With ding, ding a dong.

A month later he speaks of Dr. Johnson at her ladyship's, "who had assembled a *blue-stocking* meeting in imitation of Mrs. Vesey's Babels. It was so blue it was quite mazarine blue." And then he names the people who were there, besides, as he says, "the out-pensioners of Parnassus." Another glimpse of one of Lady Lucan's winter assemblies is funny enough, and it is no wonder that the ever-entertaining Horace was himself "diverted," as he expresses it. "The moment I entered," says he, "Lady Lucan set me down to whist with Lady Bute; and who do you think were the other partners? The Archbishopess of Canterbury and Mr. Gibbon." What a whist table!

After this we hear but little more of the "British Fair" from Walpole, but all that we do hear is quite in character. Her "unerring eye" seems to have had other "prizes" in view. Up to 1793, however, two years before Baron Lucan received an earldom, she is occasionally mentioned. We will take our last glimpse of her in a sentence from a letter to Walpole's dear Countess of Ossory, which tells her that "Lady Lucan has just called and told me what I am very sorry for, too, though in no proportion, — that Sir Joshua Reynolds has a stroke of palsy. I finish lest I should moralize."

A few twelvemonths later Walpole was in his grave. Lady Lucan outlived him many years, during sixteen of which she edified her friends and amused herself by illustrating and ornamenting (she would have said embellishing) Shakespeare's Historical Plays, — an achievement which Mr. Dibdin celebrates in some long-winded sentences. And it was not until 1814 that she who (to quote a delicious sentence of Walpole's) "arrived at copying the most exquisite works of Isaac and Peter Oliver, Hoskins, and Cooper, with a genius that almost depreciates those masters, when we consider that they spent their lives in attaining perfection, and who, soaring above their modest timidity, has transferred the vigor of Raphael to her copies" — it was not until 1814, that this forgotten immortal was gathered to her fathers.

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BOOKS OF THE MONTH.

Holiday Books. In a Fair Country, illustrated by Irene E. Jerome. (Lee & Shepard.) The text of this oblong, old-gold-covered volume consists of essays from Out-Door Papers, by T. W. Higginson. It is much if the decoration which Miss Jerome has expended recall attention to the limpid flow and fresh air of Colonel Higginson's prose. The illustrations also are done evidently *con amore*. The treatment is somewhat conventional, but the intention to secure good masses and vigorous form is almost always visible. Such a picture as Through Green Pastures and Still Waters atones for the stiff prettiness of some of the less successful designs. Cardinal Grosbeak is another design one can praise, in spite of the conventionalism of treatment. Indeed, the whole book shows a freedom of hand which it is a pity should have been cramped by a fancied necessity for variety. — The Low-Back'd Car, by Samuel Lover. With illustrative drawings by William Magrath. (Lippincott.) A pleasing series of alternating designs, slight sketches on wood and full pictures in photogravure. The Irish character is not very marked, and there is a little of the air of stage-folk about the figures. It is a pity that the letter-press should be so heavy and stubby. — Daddy Jake the Runaway, and Short Stories told after Dark, by Uncle Remus. (The Century Company.) Welcome accessions to the stock of Uncle Remus's stories. The clever pictures by Kemble determine, we suppose, the ungainly form of the book, but we thought we had done with those varnished covers which make one's flesh goosey. — Florida Days, by Margaret Deland, with illustrations by Louis K. Harlow (Little, Brown & Co.), is to be ranked among the choice holiday books of the present season. Mrs. Deland's account of Florida life in town and country is charmingly and freshly written, and Mr. Harlow has thoroughly caught the spirit of the text. He contributes sixty-five drawings, large and small, many of which are exceedingly graceful in design and handling. Only a few of them fall below the standard which the artist set for himself, and the fault of these lies mainly in the subject. The head of Sir Francis Drake, on page 30, and the full-length figure of the military gentleman, on page 103, suggest respectively Mitchell's geography and a leaf from some illustrated "war paper." There are two or three full-page colored prints, very cleverly done, the best of which is a view of the old city gates of St. Augustine; but we greatly prefer the black-and-white cuts. Here and there is a bit of landscape whose suggestiveness and delicacy cannot easily be overpraised. The sketch on page 196 is an example. The volume is handsomely printed on heavy paper and tastefully bound. — The land of the ancient Norsemen has furnished the indefatigable Du Chaillu with the material for two very interesting volumes, which he calls The Viking Age. (Scribner's Sons.) The result of his studies of the Eddas and Sagas, and the archæological collections in the Northland museums, is a graphic picture of the life, laws, and customs of the early Scandinavians, whom he claims to be the ancestors of the English-speaking race. The work is illustrated with innumerable cuts, chiefly in the text, and is altogether a valuable contribution to the subject. — The sixth volume of Good Things of Life (Stokes) is full of cleverness; but in our copy three or four of the plates are duplicated, which is too much of a good thing.

Books for the Young. The Story of the American Soldier in War and Peace, by Elbridge S. Brooks. (Lothrop.) Mr. Brooks begins before the beginning, for he introduces his story with an imaginary contest on American soil between two parties of primeval savages. He follows with an account of the Conquistadores, and we are pleased at seeing again an old friend, Balboa, in his waterproof armor, wading out into the ocean. The main part of the book is taken up with the colonial wars, the war for independence, the war of 1812, the Mexican war, Indian fighting, and the war for the Union. The criticism which we should make upon Mr. Brooks's book is that it has no distinct limits. There is a great deal of rhetoric and general talk in it, but not nearly enough simple narrative of heroism. Nobody doubts the bravery or patriotism of the American soldier, but we think the young reader does not need to be fired half so much as he needs instances of devotion, and those genuine illustrations of courage and sacrifice which do not need the accompaniment of gun and trumpet to make them stir the pulse. — Coal and the Coal Mines, by Homer Greene. (Houghton.) The fifth volume of the Riverside Library for Young People. Mr. Greene writes a very direct, simple, and wholly unpretentious English, and he has kept close to the mark of telling as plainly as he can the origin of coal, the discovery of its locality in this country, the process of mining, and in general whatever a boy with an interest in such a subject would

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naturally wish to know. Some may think the book a little hard to read, but the digestive capacity of a boy interested in mechanics is wonderful, and we are glad that Mr. Greene has not made the mistake of disguising his honest work. — To the Lions, a Tale of the Early Christians, by Alfred J. Church. (Putnams.) An interesting combination of the sensational story with historic romance. It is difficult to give the ordinary reader a lifelike picture of early Christendom. The painstaking student can pick out a few scenes and take refuge in general conceptions of the relation of old Rome to new Christendom, but it takes another art to reproduce this for those who are not students. Mr. Church's way is an accepted one, and possibly it is the only one likely to be very popular; but it certainly is desirable that the young should have the actual life clearly and without pedantry presented to their view. — The Story of Boston, a Study of Independency, by Arthur Gilman. (Putnams.) Mr. Gilman does not trouble himself to live up to his title. He makes a judicious gleaning from the annals of Boston, keeping his mind upon distinctive features of the organic growth of the community so far as possible, but there is no story. The reader may be pardoned if he does not see the woods for the trees, and becomes lost in the minute details which a conscientious collector has spread before him in orderly fashion. — A Summer in a Cañon, a California Story, by Kate Douglas Wiggin. (Houghton.) The author of the Birds' Christmas Carol needs no introduction to many readers, who will seize upon this merry book without particularly caring whether they are or are not of the age of most of the characters in it. It chronicles the adventures of a party of youngsters, under proper supervision, who camped out under a California sky. The literature of the picnic is reinforced by this book, which has plenty of fun in it, and some of that truth-speaking which lies close to laughter. — Is there not more ozone in the California air than in that which young people breathe on the Atlantic coast? At any rate, to turn from Mrs. Wiggin's young people, with their high animal spirits, to Miss Jewett's young people, who haunt the wharves and lanes of a New England seashore village, is to find the same human tune, but set to a different key. Betty Leicester, a Story for Girls (Houghton), is a little book that may promise itself a very great success. We would say that it is the best story of its kind, if there were a class of story showing anything like the same freshness and charm of touch. — Battle Fields of '61, by Willis J. Abbott (Dodd, Mead & Co.), is a narrative of the military operations of the war for the Union up to the end of the peninsular campaign, by a writer who has already been before the public with similar books on American sailors. It is a pleasure to read a book upon the war written with so much sobriety, and yet with so much intelligence and animation. It is also interesting to note, what is likely to be more familiar in the future, that the author has a sense of perspective in treating the war, and sees the natural divisions into which the struggle cleaves.

Biography. Scribner's Sons give us a popular edition of the Memories of Fifty Years, by Lester Wallack, with an introduction by Laurence Hutton. — Monk, by Julian Corbett, forms the seventh volume of the English Men of Action Series. (Macmillan.) — The Diary of Philip Hone. (Dodd, Mead & Co.) These two portly volumes will greatly interest the New Yorker whose memory goes back to 1828, — the starting-point of the present record. Mr. Hone's journals, though of no exceptional literary value, have a charming old-fashioned flavor, and give us really entertaining glimpses of the social and political life of New York at a period when there were many distinguished and picturesque figures on the stage. The writer, a retired merchant, with a liking for the sunny side of things, seems to have known everybody worth knowing in his generation, — authors, painters, statesmen, actors, and foreign notabilities, upon several of whom his revelations throw a pleasant side-light. We shall have occasion to refer to the work later. — The Life of Lessing, by T. W. Rolleston, is the latest addition to the Great Writers Series. (W. Scott.) — The Life of Harriet Beecher Stowe, compiled from her letters and journals, by her son, C. E. Stowe (Houghton), is a work that will commend itself to a large audience. The chapters dealing with the writing and production of Uncle Tom's Cabin possess especial interest. The book contains the most recent portrait of Mrs. Stowe, and portraits of other members of the Beecher family. — The Letters of the Duke of Wellington to Miss J., edited, with extracts from the Diary of the latter, by Christine Terhune Herrick (Dodd, Mead & Co.), is a curious epistolary revelation. It shows that the Iron Duke was not all iron. Though lacking the charm of Prosper Mérimée's Inconnue, the proselyting Miss J. appears to have been too much for his Grace, whose fame is securer in the field than in the library. The remarkable thing about it all is that Wellington allowed this morbidly pious young woman to bore him more or less for seventeen years. He found her very tedious at last — as the reader does at first. — Letters of Horace Walpole, selected and edited by Charles Duke Yonge. (Putnams.) A fresh selection from Walpole's delightful correspon-

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dence is always welcome. It is almost impossible to make a dull book in that kind; but it is not easy to make the very best. Mr. Yonge, so far as his limits go, seems to have done this. His introduction is brief but sufficient, and his explanatory notes are valuable. These two volumes will perhaps have the effect of sending the new reader to the larger work, if he is a tasteful reader.

Politics. The latest volume of Dr. Von Holst's work on The Constitutional and Political History of the United States covers the period 1856–1859, and includes the election of Buchanan and the close of the thirty-fifth Congress. Mr. Lalor continues the translation, and it is not always possible for the reader to determine how much of the involution of the text is due to the author and how much to the translator. We quote a single paragraph in an interesting treatment of the subject of Western railways, to illustrate the conflict which goes on between language and ideas in this oddly provoking book: "As the State was not the railroad builder with both the moral right and the actual practical possibility, in enterprises of a permanent character conducive to the common welfare, to throw a larger or smaller part of the cost on the future, the evil consequences of all the uneconomic — uneconomic in the sense just referred to — construction of railways would, necessarily, within a conceivable time, be keenly felt by a large part of the people; but that fact — the fact that the State was not the builder of the railways — was only another reason that made them shoot up like mushrooms after a rainy night." All our respect for Von Holst and all our admiration for his industry and keenness of judgment cannot reconcile us to such serpentine language. After one has uncoiled the paragraph he cannot get the kinks out. (Callaghan & Co., Chicago.) — Constitutional History of the United States, as seen in the Development of American Law. (Putnams.) This work contains five lectures given before the Political Science Association of the University of Michigan, by Judge Cooley, Henry Hitchcock, George W. Biddle, Professor Charles A. Kent, and D. H. Chamberlain. Professor Rogers, of the University, provides an introduction. The scheme is a very simple and satisfactory one, for it contemplates a survey of our constitutional development by reference to the successive decisions of the Supreme Court, and it takes into account the masterly influence of Marshall, Jay, and their successors. The final lecture considers the relation of the state judiciary to the American constitutional system. The whole volume gives an agreeable and fresh introduction to the study of constitutional history. — An Introduction to the Local Constitutional History of the United States, by George E. Howard. (Johns Hopkins University.) This is the first volume of a proposed series, and is devoted to the development of the Township, Hundred, and Shire; and though it does not open the subject, it does for the first time make something like a full comparative study of the norms of political institutions as seen in both the East and the West, the Southern variation being less fully considered. The illustrations are drawn from a great variety of sources, and there is ample foundation of authority. We shall be surprised if this book does not stimulate a great deal of special work in the departments so comprehensively treated by Professor Howard, and the advantage is very great of having the subject first presented in its wider aspect. — The State: Elements of Historical and Practical Politics; a sketch of institutional history and administration. By Woodrow Wilson. (Heath.) Mr. Wilson has done for the larger domain of the state, including its minor forms, what Mr. Howard has done for the less highly developed organisms. He has given a text-book of comparative politics, and almost for the first time, if not for the very first, the student has the opportunity of comparing all the great modern forms of government, as well as of Greece and Rome, within the compass of a single volume. It is an inductive study of governments, with concluding chapters on the nature and forms, the functions and objects, of government and the character of law. No one who knows Mr. Wilson's methodical mind and clear statement will doubt that he has achieved an extraordinary success in making his book at all. He is scientific in his method, but he is also intuitive in his perception of the profound relations of law which underlie the forms of government, so that the book has a unity which is always helpful to the student. — The United States, its History and Constitution, by Alexander Johnston. (Scribners.) Mr. Johnston is seen at his best in this book, and one cannot read its compact, orderly sentences without keen regret for the loss of a writer who applied the test of clear sense to the interpretation of our history, our politics, and our public men. There was a downright honesty in the man and a lawyer-like sagacity of judgment which kept him free from illusions, yet there was also an enthusiasm which made him quick to see the generous side of American history and politics. The book was written originally as an article in the Encyclopædia Britannica, and thus was intended for English as well as American readers. It sometimes happens that one who writes for a foreign audience gains almost the advantage of posterity, and we think that this book has thus peculiar value for Americans of to-day.

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